

# Workshop on restructuring

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(BIAM), and informed it that the meeting would not take place at the BIAM auditorium due to "unavoidable reasons," said the official.

The postponement came after the finance ministry wrote to the commission saying the government didn't give its consent to the workshop, said a source at the ministry.

The official, however, didn't give any reasons for the postponement of the event.

The commission's move to organise the event drew sharp criticisms from microcredit campaigners and independent observers after some agendas of the workshop had been revealed.

A number of invitees also questioned the legality of the workshop. Some even wrote to the commission refusing to attend the programme.

AK Monaw-war Uddin Ahmad, a professor of economics at Dhaka University, said he had written to the commission and said he was unavailable.

He questioned the legality of the workshop, saying it was ultra-vires of the Commission of Enquiry Act, 1956.

"Your [the commission] workshop is without the sanction of the law under which you function and therefore, ultra-vires of the Commission of Enquiry Act," he said in his letter to the commission.

Ahmad, who had been appointed by the government earlier to lead a review committee to look into Grameen Bank's activities, said the commission was set up to review the bank's activities and 48 other legally independent organisations, and make recommendations on how to run the

organisations.

"It is a court and cannot hold such workshops," he said.

The commission had invited about 15 experts, including Rehman Sobhan, chairman of Centre for Policy Dialogue, and MM Akash, a professor of economics at Dhaka University.

Hours before the postponement of the workshop, Rehman Sobhan said he had not yet looked at the invitation card, while Akash said he wouldn't attend the programme until the legal issue was settled.

The government set up the commission in September last year.

Supporters and friends of Grameen Bank questioned the move to form the body right from the outset.

It caused controversy in February when the commission in its interim report said Grameen Bank

is a government bank, and also suggested the government set a minimum educational requirement for the elected directors of the bank.

The commission provoked further controversy a couple of weeks ago after it was revealed that the body was planning to propose splitting the bank into at least 19 zones or restructuring it in a way that the government secures at least 51 percent share in the bank.

The commission had wanted to use the workshop to discuss its proposals before making final recommendations to the government.

Grameen Bank's nine borrower-directors, who hold a majority in the 12-member board, and its employees' association condemned the proposals, and threatened to go for a movement unless the commission scrapped its suggestions.

# JP still divided

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Ajmat," Monwar said yesterday evening.

According to him, half of the JP leaders and activists in Gazipur city are supporting Ajmat while the other half are campaigning in favour of Mannan.

Kazi Mahmud and Nurul Islam have been asking the district unit leaders and activists to work against the AL-backed candidate since, they say, the Awami League deprived and undervalued the JP in the last four and a half years.

Nurul Islam yesterday once again told The Daily Star that neither of them had formally extended support to any candidate. But they were against the AL-backed candidate, Ajmat.

Amid such a situation, the JP district unit president will sit with the city unit leaders and activists

today to discuss the issue.

They may come up with a concrete decision after the meeting, said Nurul Islam.

Meanwhile, Ajmat announced his electoral manifesto with an array of pledges targeting workers of garment and other industries. They are considered as the decision makers as to who will become the mayor in Gazipur, an industrial zone.

Presenting the electoral manifesto at a community centre in Gazipur, he said he would protect workers' rights if he got elected.

"Necessary measures will be taken to increase the salaries of workers, arrange accommodation and ensure their security." Ajmat also promised to arrange jobs for workers' children after their parents' retirement and death.

He also said he would form a city development coordination committee

comprising different political, social and professional representatives. Besides, the city will be divided into three separate zones - industrial zone, residential zone and commercial zone.

Jahangir Alam, a former Chhatra League leader who had submitted his candidacy for the polls but later pulled out of the race on instructions from the prime minister, once again said he and his supporters were working for Ajmat in line with the PM's directive.

He also urged all leaders and activists of AL and its associate bodies to jointly work for Ajmat.

ALLEGATIONS OF BNP BNP standing committee member Brig Gen (ret) ASM Hannan Shah alleged that the government was conspiring to rig the election to help Ajmat win by appointing pro-AL presiding officers in

the polls.

At a press briefing at Basan Sarak of Gazipur, he said the presiding officers were former Jubo League and Chhatra League activists. The BNP will lodge complaints with the Election Commission and demand their withdrawal.

Meanwhile, supporters of Ajmat claimed two of his supporters had been injured in an attack by BNP-Jamaat activists at Noljani in Gazipur yesterday morning. The BNP rejected the allegation.

Topu, 23, and Mamun 25 were injured while they were distributing leaflets, said Shahjahan, media coordinator of Ajmat's electoral campaign.

Delwar Hossain, a close aide of Mannan, said some people had been spreading propaganda against Mannan and as Mannan's supporters protested against it a scuffle took place.

# No looting

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The capital market burst following sharp but irrational gains in 2010. The country's stock market has been on a downward trend since the crash. The government has taken many steps to pull it back but to no avail while the opposition puts the blame on the Awami League-led grand alliance, saying people with ties to the ruling party had siphoned money from the stock market.

"Nothing (money) evaporates from the share

market, some people get it. Most of them belong to your party (the opposition)," Muhith said before passing the budget yesterday.

Regarding various scams in the banking sector, including that of Hall-Mark, Muhith said the condition of the banking sector in the country had never been as good as it was now. The amount of total credit in the banks at present is Tk 401,00,000 crore and a small portion of

that, Tk 5,000crore, has been swindled, he added.

About siphoning of money, the finance minister said, "You [opposition] are very vocal about money laundering. We could not catch much laundering except for that by two persons (alluding to two sons of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia).

Muhith told the opposition lawmakers that propaganda replete with exaggeration over trifles blemished Bangladesh's position to the world.

# Specialist doctors

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Ujjal used several degrees before his name, including MAIAPSM (India), DAMS (Madras, Velore), MD; BPT (India) and CPT (DU). But he could not provide any certificates or documents to prove that he had the degrees.

Sources said around 12 patients used to visit Ujjal's chamber in two shifts every day.

Nilon Bawm, who took his aunt for treatment, said they thought Ujjal was a specialist doctor after seeing the degrees before his name on the signboard hanging at his chamber.

Ujjal yesterday charged Tk 10,920 for treatment, including injections and medicines, added Nilom.

Chitra said they charge Tk 500 for a physiotherapy session and Tk 500 for a day's stay in the clinic.

The couple has two children, a six-year-old son and an 11-month-old daughter.

**Political**

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The government had imposed section 144 for 75 times in seven divisional headquarters during the period, said the report of the human rights organisation.

**REPRESSION ON WOMEN**

The ASK report also said 529 women were raped and 158 tortured for dowry in the last six months.

Forty-four women were killed after being raped, 46 housemaids had been tortured by their employers, 11 women committed suicide due to sexual harassment and 11 fell victim to fatwa (religious edicts) during the period.

# EU seeks to read new

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changes saying they will make the labour conditions worse.

A finance ministry official said the European envoys do not want to see trade privileges revoked. "However, they urged the government to share the proposed labour law with them so that no such situation is created in future," he said.

The EU ambassadors said their main concern was how to build a better environment for garment workers in Bangladesh.

The meeting, held at the National Economic Council auditorium, was co-chaired by Economic Relations Division Secretary Abul Kalam Azad and UN Resident Coordinator Neal Walker.

At the meeting, ERD officials presented the present status of three laws including the labour law.

Azad said the labour law has been approved by the cabinet and placed in parliament. At this stage, he added, the scope for sharing the draft is small but he would still convey the EU ambassadors' wish to the government.

After the disasters in Tazreen Fashions and Rana Plaza, factory owners and the government had pledged to take steps to improve labour standards.

The EU officials had sought details from their respective embassies in Dhaka on the implementation of those commitments and pledges.

The EU said it will stay engaged with Bangladesh in improving labour standards, according to the statement.

Its Trade Commissioner De Gucht will hold a high-level meeting in Geneva on July 8. Garment factory owners, trade union leaders and some leading buyers will attend the meeting, which will focus on labour rights, safety and health at work and responsible business conduct.

Gucht met Foreign Minister Dipu Moni on May 28 on how to address factory disasters in Bangladesh, while avoiding hardship for its citizens.

"Both sides agreed that the key to a lasting improvement lies in the engagement of all actors in the supply chain," the

statement said.

The EU aims to "uphold fundamental human rights, of which adhering to core labour standards is an intrinsic part".

The GSP provided by the EU benefits all products from Bangladesh under its 'everything but arms' scheme.

The EU wishes to remain engaged with Bangladesh so that it can preserve the preferential access to the EU market, which has greatly helped socio-economic development over the years, according to the statement.

The ILO will monitor progress in the joint efforts by stakeholders in improving the labour conditions in Bangladesh this year and throughout 2014. "The EU will follow this process closely."

Bangladesh exports about \$11 billion merchandise duty-free to European markets a year, with 90 percent coming from garments alone.

The EU accounts for 60 percent of garment exports out of Bangladesh, and the US comes in second at 30 percent.

# Dhaka wants

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Washington, Quader said.

The minister added he had started preparing the progress report yesterday on actions over the promises made to the USTR, the minister told The Daily Star over the phone.

"I ordered the officials to make the report within two days, but it might not be possible. It may take a few more days," he said. "On completion of the progress report, I will place it before the cabinet. If the cabinet allows me to send it to the US government, I will do so."

"But the chances of the GSP restoration will be brighter if Bangladesh can sign the Tifca as the country could appeal via this trade dialogue platform," the ministers said.

Quader said he would evaluate the progress over commitments made in the four USTR hearings since 2007, year of the first hearing.

"But here again I am saying Tifca is not any condition for a reinstatement of GSP. Signing Tifca will create only a platform to settle trade disputes between the two countries through holding dialogues," Quader said.

The minister also claimed

Bangladesh has also progressed significantly in some areas like appointment of factory inspectors, ensuring worker safety, factory vigilance by the government inspection teams, passage of 2006 labour law amendment and increasing wages for the garment workers.

The cabinet of the incumbent government approved the Tifca draft on June 17.

A 13-member delegation from Bangladesh led by Commerce Secretary Mahbub Ahmed attended the March 28 hearing at USTR, which directly negotiates with foreign governments to create trade agreements, to defend the country's position.

They attended the hearing because the largest trade union of the US, American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organisation (AFL-CIO), together with some senators urged the USTR to suspend or cancel the GSP facility after the deadly Tazreen Fashions fire killed at least 112 workers in November.

The Rana Plaza collapse which claimed 1,132 lives in April intensified the pressure for suspending the trade benefit.

# SQ Chy's new antics

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was an active supporter of Bangladesh's independence during the war.

While testifying on the seventh day of his deposition as a defence witness in his own trial, the BNP lawmaker gave his version of the Liberation War history and talked about his lifestyle.

The prosecution even termed it twisting the history of our liberation struggle.

Even though the Tribunal-1 had been asking him to be precise in his deposition on the charges against him, Salauddin's testimony continued to be "irrelevant and immaterial".

Salauddin, accused of committing genocide as well, claimed that he along with others was at the his-

toric March 7, 1971, rally addressed by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at then Race Course Maidan.

Salauddin claimed that by taking part in that rally he legitimately became an "active supporter for the cause of the Independence of Bangladesh".

He said Nurul Amin and Raja Tridiv Kumar Roy, the two non-Awami Leaguer elected parliament members from East Pakistan in the 1970's general elections, had declared their unqualified support for Sheikh Mujibur Rahman taking over as the prime minister of Pakistan.

He claimed that his father Fazlul Quader Chowdhury was committed to the cause of East Pakistan.

Prosecutor Zead Al

Malum told the Tribunal-1 that SQ Chowdhury was twisting history and urged the tribunal to record the objection.

The tribunal recorded the objection.

The proceedings of the case were adjourned until today as the war crimes accused prayed for adjournment due to his illness.

Meanwhile, the Tribunal-1 asked the prosecution to submit formal charges against war crimes suspect ATM Azharul Islam on July 15.

Submitting the progress report, prosecutor AKM Saiful Islam sought two weeks for submitting formal charges.

Azharul was brought before the tribunal yesterday.

# The MidEast plague may go global

**Hajj pilgrimage in focus amid MERS virus fears**

**AGENCIES**

When the Black Death exploded in Arabia in the 14th century, killing an estimated third of the population, it spread across the Islamic world via infected hajj pilgrims.

Today, the Middle East is threatened with a new plague, one eponymous if not ominously named the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS-CoV, or MERS for short).

Virologists are casting a worried eye on this year's Islamic hajj pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia as they struggle with the enigmatic, deadly virus which is striking hard-

est in the kingdom.

Little is known about the new pathogen, beyond the fact that it can be lethal by causing respiratory problems, pneumonia and kidney failure. It can be transmitted between humans, but unlike its cousin, the SARS virus, which sparked a scare a decade ago, it does not seem very contagious.

Even so, for any respiratory virus the mass gathering of the hajj provides a perfect opportunity to first spread at the two holiest Muslim shrines in the cities of Makkah and Medina, and then travel around the globe at jet speed as pilgrims return home.

**Padma Oil Company Limited**  
(A Subsidiary of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation)  
Padma Bhaban, Strand Road, P.O. Box No. 4, Chittagong

**Re-Advertisement for Expression of Interest for Selection of Consulting Firm**

- Ministry/Division : Energy and Mineral Resources Division.
- Agency : Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation.
- Procuring entity name : Padma Oil Company Limited.
- Procuring entity district : Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Expression of interest for : Selection of Consulting Firm.
- EOI Ref. No. & date : RMD: 27(A) dated: 30/06/2013.
- Procurement method : Open Tender Method.
- Budget and source of fund : POCL's own source.
- Project name : Feasibility study for Construction of Multistoried Building(s) for best utilization of POCL's land at 6, Elephant Road, Paribag, Dhaka.
- EOI receiving date & time : 21/07/2013 up to 1430hrs.
- Brief description of assignment : Padma Oil Company Limited owned a plot of land at 6, Elephant Road, Paribag, Dhaka measuring around 2 (two) acres. Now POCL intend to appoint a consulting firm to carry out Demand Assessment Survey and best land use study of the land in order to finalise the manner in which way the land can be used to generate maximum revenue. Techno-Commercial Viability of the proposed aforesaid projects shall have the following salient features:
  - To carry out market survey to ascertain commercial demand in the area in the coming time period of next 50 (fifty) years or more and to propose the type of construction to suit the demand in the proposed complex.
  - Generate various development options/models and recommend which alternative that will be most beneficial to POCL.
  - Viability of the project may also be worked out in partnership model with no financial involvement from POCL. However, suggestions for the most commercial viable projects appropriate financing model as to whether the project is to be financed by POCL from its own resources or from the borrowed capital from the Financial Institutions or mix of both may also be provided.
  - Each alternative of the proposal shall be supported by all the relevant vital details like cost of the project, time period of the completion, cash flow requirement, cost of the funds, cost benefit ratio, the yearly profit likely profit to accrue to POCL by way of leasing out the build-up space, up-front payment with sharing of space/rental etc.
  - Details of interaction with four to five renowned land development companies of the relevant field/area for assessing various parameters needed for viability of the project.
  - In the City Development Plan/Area Plan/Revenue Records, the area of the compound and its usages has to be checked/arranged by the consultant. Comments on the feasibility of change of land use for the proposed scheme with likely premium to be paid to statutory authorities for the same.
  - Preparation and submission of the final report with recommendation of the most beneficial model to POCL. The project report should be good enough for obtaining the loan from financial institutions, if required.
  - The consultant shall provide all the assistance or reply of the queries which may be required till the report is finally accepted by the POCL.
- Qualification experience and : The applicant should have experience as below:
  - The applicant should have satisfactorily completed similar works during the last 7 (seven) years ending last day of the month prior to the one in which the EOI has been invited, as under:
    - Three similar works\*, each pertaining to development of 3,000 SqM of land area, OR
    - Two similar works\*, each pertaining to development of 7,000 SqM of land area, OR
    - One similar works\*, each pertaining to development of 10,000 SqM of land area.
  - Similar work(s) shall mean providing of consultancy services for assessment of Techno-Commercial viability/feasibility and successful signing of concession agreement & appointment of developer for construction/development of institutional/commercial/residential complex.
  - At least one consultancy work of any type should have been executed in any government, semi-government or autonomous organisation in the last 7 (seven) years.
  - The bidder's average annual financial turnover (gross), by way of professional receipts for the consultancy services during immediate last three consecutive financial years (ending 30th June) duly audited by a Chartered Accountant shall not be less than Tk. 10 (ten) crores with minimum turnover of Tk. 2 (two) crores in a year.
- Other details : (a) The expression of interest must comprise the following:
  - Covering letter
  - Company profile
  - Experience details
  - Income tax returns
 The copies of income tax returns for the last 3 years. (b) Only short-listed consulting firm will be called to participate in the Request for Proposal (RFP). Added advantage.
- Association with foreign firm
- Place of receiving the EOI : Padma Bhaban, Padma Oil Company Limited, 4, Strand Road, Sadarghat, Chittagong-4000 & Padma Bhaban, Padma Oil Company Limited, 6, Paribag, Dhaka-1000.

**PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS**

- Name of the official inviting EOI : Nareh Chandra Das.
- Designation of the official inviting EOI : DGM, Dhaka.
- Address of the official inviting EOI : Padma Bhaban, Padma Oil Co. Ltd., 6, Paribag, Dhaka-1000. Web address: [www.pocl.gov.bd](http://www.pocl.gov.bd) Phone: 8625780-84, 9669364 Fax: 028617041 E-mail: [pocldgmdnc@yahoo.com](mailto:pocldgmdnc@yahoo.com)
- Contact details of the official inviting EOI

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs at any time/or stage without assigning any reason whatsoever and no claim will be entertained in this regard. Applicants already submitted proposals will not require re-submission. This EOI is available in the tender page of the website mentioned above.