

# BASIC Bank

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and Mirpur-10. Moreover, the grace period and repayment period was extended with the head office's due approval considering the clients' genuine business needs. After extension of the grace period, the repayment of monthly instalments will start in December 2013.

2. JTC Cargo International: The loan was duly approved by the head office.

3. Abdus Salam and Five Brothers: Since the nature of the project changed from residential building to resident-cum-commercial building, the requirement of fund increased and the loan limit was enhanced accordingly. At present, the loan is covered by the existing collateral security. After restructuring the loan, the borrower is depositing the instalments regularly.

4. ABM Kamrul Islam: Although rescheduling facility was approved by the head office, the branch did not effect the rescheduling. Moreover, the client has not allowed any new facility and the bank filed a suit against the borrower to recover the

bank's money.

5. New Nipa Auto Rice Mills: New Nipa Auto Rice Mills is availing credit facility of Tk 10 crore from our Shantinagar branch, not Tk 100 crore.

6. The volume of the classified loans increased in 2012 due to implementation of the new circular for loan classification and provisioning by Bangladesh Bank. The classified loan increased in the banking industry due to the new rules.

## OUR REPLY

Our story was based on a report sent by the commercial audit department of the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the banking division of the finance ministry on June 18.

When contacted, the commercial audit department declined to make any official comment beyond its audit observation on the issue.

However, we regret that we mistakenly mentioned that New Nipa Auto Rice Mills is availing itself of Tk 100 crore credit from the bank's Shantinagar branch. The correct amount will be Tk 10 crore.



Some bus drivers have turned a part of the Jatrabari intersection into a terminal hogging a significant part of the road. People sometimes spend hours just to get in and out of the capital due to the notorious traffic jams of Jatrabari.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Forced hiring hits project operation

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men, including technicians and welders, as per their choice.

In April, more than 150 people of Charchartala village led by leaders of different political parties, including upazila AL secretary Hanif Munshi, had demonstrated in front of the project site to force the authorities to employ the locals, Site Manager Shoumen Ghosh told The Daily Star.

To calm the situation, it was decided that local leaders Hanif Munshi and Ashuganj freedom fighter commander Iqbal Hossain, also the local contractor of Peal, would recommend people to Charchartala union Chairman Ayub Khan for recruitment in the project.

As per the decision, Peal has employed 100 local

people -- 30 welders, 45 labourers and 25 security workers -- in the project.

"They [the local workers] are being given Tk 10,000 in wages, daily food and place to stay. However, 15 of them kept drawing salaries without complying with the work rules," said Shoumen.

The actual trouble started on the afternoon of June 13 when one local worker Sanury Sarker, 24, was terminated for misbehaving with an engineer.

Sanury called his relatives over the mobile phone and swooped on the project site when 10 to 12 of his musclemen arrived. His brother Chanchal Sarker was leading the group of thugs.

They had assaulted several employees and vandalised window panes, four laptops, two desktop computers and several

mobile phones, said Shoumen, who was also badly beaten up by the attackers.

In connection with the incident, Peal MD Mahmud filed a case with Ashuganj police against Sanury and Chanchal and 20 other unnamed.

"Later I submitted the names of all the people who were involved in the attack, but police are not taking any action against them, as the culprits have close link with Hanif Munshi," said Shoumen.

Contacted, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Ashuganj Police Station Golam Faruk said they had so far arrested a worker named Al Amin and were trying to arrest the others.

He said the project site was now under constant police watch.

Hanif however refuted the allegation of having

any link with the attackers. He said, "I heard Iqbal Hossain's son led the attack and beat up Peal officials."

He also alleged that Iqbal was trying to take full control of supplying construction materials and workers to earn commission from both sides.

However, both Iqbal and Shoumen refuted Hanif's allegations.

Iqbal said although he and Hanif did not have personal enmity, the present conflict had emerged centring business interests.

Meanwhile, Peal staffs are still reeling from the trauma of the attack.

According to the Peal MD, the project suffered loss in the attack and now they are doing night shifts to complete the work within the stipulated time.

## Stay alert

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so that such governments do not assume office in future," she said.

The premier made the remarks while inaugurating the three-day Deputy Commissioners' Conference 2013 at the International Conference Centre in her office.

She gave a 17-point directive to the deputy commissioners (DCs) on implementing various government programmes.

Hasina reiterated that the next election would be held like in other democratic countries of the world.

"The next polls will be held in such a manner so that the democratic process continues in the country," she added.

Underscoring the need for protection of democracy, the premier said people could make mistakes or may be confused while casting vote.

"But they [people] will learn from the mistake. We let the process start...as long as the process does not begin, democracy won't sustain and socioeconomic development of people won't occur," she said.

Mentioning that the next elections will be held in a free, fair and peaceful manner, Hasina said, "I believe that

your [DCs] strong role, work efficiency and intent on flourishing the healthy democratic trend would continue."

She also said the 15th amendment to the constitution had paved the way for flourishing democracy.

"For the first time in the country, an independent, neutral and strong Election Commission has been constituted through discussion," she told the conference.

About 6,000 elections including the Jatiya Sangsad by-polls were held during the tenure of the present governments.

"No question was raised about the elections as every poll was held in a free, fair and impartial manner, thanks to the good intention of the government and united efforts of all concerned," she said.

She directed the DCs to take proper steps so that no one can create religious fanaticism in the name of Islam.

Referring to the DC conference, the premier said, "It plays an important role in identifying and overcoming the problems while implementing the government policies and programmes at the grassroots level."

She said her government

had been striving hard to fulfil the pledges it made before the elections.

"We have achieved unprecedented successes in most of the fields and I am hopeful that the rest of the commitments of the government could be implemented before the next polls," she added.

About the war crimes trial, Hasina said, "The trial of war criminals is going ahead, and the verdict in six cases has already been delivered."

It is necessary to complete the trial and free the nation from stigma, she told the conference.

The premier advised the DCs to give special attention to people so that they do not face harassment while getting any government services.

She urged them to keep a sharp eye on maintaining transparency in the land administration and protecting the government lands.

HT Imam, public administration affairs adviser to the premier and Cabinet Secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan addressed the function.

Ministers, secretaries, divisional commissioners and senior officials of the government were also present.

## Home ministry

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Banglabandh land port to facilitate tourist movement to and from Nepal, Bhutan and Darjeeling.

They suggested that the government turn nearly 33 abandoned airstrips into exclusive economic zones and build Cox's Bazar as an exclusive tourist zone.

They also requested that the government allow Tk 25 lakh housing loan for government employees, increasing it from Tk 1.2 lakh at present.

During the session with the ministers of education and primary and mass education, the DCs called for ensuring transparency in teachers recruitment, and suggested initiating a central recruitment system involving them for appointing competent teachers at non-government educational institutions.

They recommended curbing interference of political leaders and other influential quarters in the school managing committees or governing bodies of MPO-listed educational institutions.

They also proposed conducting school admission under their supervision to ensure transparency.

A home ministry source said the DCs pointed out that they could not try offenders, who commit crimes even before the mobile courts, in the absence of a comprehensive law.

A mobile court can now punish someone only when he confesses his guilt.

In many cases, the DCs do not have adequate police force to conduct drives.

As a solution to the problem, the home ministry proposed formation of a separate police wing for the purpose, added the source.

Bagerhat DC said law enforcement agencies like police, Rab and Coast Guard lacked coordination among them, which left an adverse impact on law and order, according to the source.

After the session, State Minister for home Shamsul Haque Tuku said, "I asked the deputy commissioners to ascertain whether all the Jamaat and opposition men who created anarchy in different parts of the country, including Satkhira, Gaibandha and Chittagong, following the war crimes verdicts were arrested or not."

"If not, I asked them to talk with the superintendents of police for taking steps against them."

He also asked the DCs to identify all the mosques from where religious propaganda was fanned out following the verdict against Jamaat leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee.

Tuku said he directed the DCs to identify those who used mosques for such acts and take action against them.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid spoke for more training for teachers.

"So far, we have trained more than 10 lakh teachers," he told reporters.

Nahid added: "We all know that influential local people interfere in the school management committees and the deputy commissioners called for curbing this interference. We agreed on it."

During the session, Bandarban DC pointed out that the three hill districts lacked qualified teachers as the recruitment process in these districts is different from that of other districts, said a meeting source.

## 17 kg gold

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suspicious behaviour on board the plane, he said.

The arrestee was drunk when the customs officials found the gold bars after searching a plastic bag he was carrying. They also seized around 400 grams of gold ornaments from him.

The gold bars, each weighing about 11 grams, were found wrapped with Scotch tape and hidden inside four rolls of cloth in the bag.

A resident of Boalkhali upazila in Chittagong, Morshed told reporters that he worked as a driver in Dubai and that it was his first time smuggling gold.

He told police and customs officials that he did not own the gold, was just a carrier and was going to hand it over to someone in Dhaka, said Md Moyeen Uddin, assistant commissioner of Immigration Police.

## AFL-CIO slams

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raised by workers' rights advocates," it said.

"In our view, the changes made by the Bangladesh government did not bring the country's labour law into compliance with ILO fundamental rights, conventions and standards," said the largest trade union of the US.

The AFL-CIO had filed a petition with the United States Trade Representative in 2007 questioning Bangladesh's eligibility for the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), which resulted in the Obama administration suspending the trade privileges for the

country on June 27.

On July 15, Bangladesh parliament amended the labour law of 2006.

In a statement, the AFL-CIO said while there are some positive changes in the law with regard to building and worker safety, these must be "fleshed out" by implementing regulations before their impact could be known.

"Unfortunately, the law does not establish a time limit when such regulations must be put in place. More troubling, the vagueness of the legislative provisions allows for regulations that can actually inhibit, rather than promote, the exercise

of workers' rights," said Celeste Drake, trade and globalisation policy specialist at the AFL-CIO.

She said, "Given the problematic history of government actions in Bangladesh, both the lack of specificity in the law as amended and the absence of firm deadlines to issue regulations are worrisome."

The trade union said the law does not make union registration easier to accomplish, as the government office responsible for registration of unions would continue to enjoy broad discretionary authority to accept or reject union applications.

It said the new labour law creates numerous obstacles to the exercise of the right to strike.

The AFL-CIO said the government largely ignored recommendations made by the country's unions on changes to the labour law, and the lawmaking process was cloaked in mystery during its final stages.

It believes that the law does not address key freedom of association issues.

The trade union urged the US to make it clear to Bangladesh that it does not consider the law a step forward in the efforts to restore trade benefits under the GSP programme.

## Dolphins

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Dolphins make a lot of vocalisations to communicate with each other, including echolocation clicks, whistles to attract other animals to food locations and other noises to indicate how aggressive or friendly they feel.

The signature whistles are most often used by dolphins when they are travelling in groups and want to let their companions know where they are.

"Other contexts are particularly when groups meet at sea, they exchange information about who is present before the groups join, almost like a greeting," said Vincent Janik, a biologist at St Andrews University, who led the research. His research team wanted to know how far dolphins were using these skills to identify each other and themselves.

They watched a population of around 150-180 dolphins living off the east coast of Scotland, initially identifying and recording signature whistles and then playing these whistles back to the entire group.

## Mueen, Ashraf led abductions

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During his 82-minute testimony at the International Crimes Tribunal-2, the 65-year-old gave a heart-wrenching description of how his father had been dragged out of the teachers' quarters on DU campus and his struggle to find his father's body.

"I am sure that I will get justice [from the tribunal]," he said as he completed his testimony as the fourth prosecution witness in the case against Mueen Uddin and Ashrafuzzaman, who had fled to the UK and the USA after the very birth of Bangladesh.

State-appointed defence counsels Abdus Shukur Khan and Salma Hai Tuny then completed cross-examining Enamul before the three-member tribunal led by Justice Obaidul Hassan.

Enamul said his father had been a professor of the education administration department of Institute of Education Research of DU and lived in a teachers' quar-

ters on Fuller Road on DU campus. One of his paternal uncles, Shamsul Haque Khan, had also lived with them.

His father was a believer of Bengalee nationalism and was a progressive man. Being a teacher of the education administration, he used to speak against the discriminatory education policy of the then Pakistan government. "I think, for these reasons, my father became the target of the Pakistani army and their collaborators," Enamul said.

Around 8:30am on December 14, 1971, a minibus stopped in front of their quarters. Five to seven armed men climbed up to the third floor and knocked on their door.

His uncle Shamsul opened the door to see two of them at the door and the others standing in the staircase. One of the two asked for his father, said Enamul, who had witnessed the whole thing standing beside his uncle.

Perplexed, Enamul's uncle told them that Serajul was at Prof Ismail's home on the ground floor.

The armed men went down.

"From the balcony, my uncle and I saw them dragging my father out of Ismail Shaheb's home."

The armed men then blindfolded Serajul and took him away in the minibus, Enamul told the court.

Since there was a curfew they could not go out but later that day they learnt that Mohammad Martuza, who was a physician of DU medical centre, was abducted from campus along with the brother-in-law of Mustafizur Rahman, a professor of the DU Arabic department.

The brother-in-law of Mustafizur, who worked in Daily Sangram was returned to the campus the following day on a military vehicle.

Enamul wanted to see Mustafizur's brother-in-law, since he had been taken just like his father, but Mustafizur

did not allow Enamul to see his brother-in-law.

During his cross-examination yesterday, Enamul said he believed that Mustafizur's brother-in-law had helped Al-Badr men identify DU teachers.

Mustafizur too was arrested after the war under the Collaborator Act, 1972, he said.

On the evening of December 15, 1971, they heard that Faizul Mahi, Abul Khayer, Prof Anwar Pasha, Prof Rashidul Hasan, Santosh Chandra Bhattacharyya and Prof Giasuddin Ahmed were also abducted from campus the previous day in similar fashion, said Enamul.

After the surrender of the Pakistani army on December 16, Enamul, his friends and his father's colleagues searched for his father and other abducted intellectuals.

"I searched almost all killing grounds in Dhaka city and surrounding areas for two weeks. I, even, looked for

my father's body among the bodies floating in the rivers. But, I didn't find him," said Enamul choking with emotions.

In January, 1972, an NSI official went to Enamul's home with Mafizuddin, who was driving the minibus for Al-Badr.

Quoting Mafiz, Enamul told the court that in that minibus, his father and other detainees had first been taken to Lohar Pool at the city's Gabtoli. They were then taken to Mirpur (the place where the Martyred Intellectuals' Memorial was built after independence) and Ashrafuzzaman shot and killed them.

In early January, 1972, eight bodies were exhumed from two mass graves identified by Mafiz.

"I identified my father's body by his belt, pants and his identity card. I also identified the body of Santosh Chandra Bhattacharyya. I didn't find it hard to identify him as he was my teacher."

Other family members

also identified their loved ones and the eight bodies were taken to Dhaka Medical College morgue. Enamul said he had talked to Masuda Banu Ratna, niece of martyred Prof Giasuddin, at the DMC morgue.

Earlier, Ratna, as the first prosecution witness in this case, testified that she saw Mueen Uddin and Ashrafuzzaman abduct her maternal uncle from DU campus.

Enamul told the tribunal he had had no idea about the identities of the abductors but Ratna, who had been involved in student politics, knew them.

Ratna's description of her uncle's abductors matched with the abductors of Enamul's father, he said.

Enamul saw the photos of two people, who had abducted his father, on daily Purbadesh. The paper had published the photos of Mueen Uddin and Ashrafuzzaman with the caption "help capture the killers".