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### **Summary**

Bangladesh: Bangladesh “pushed back” 15 middle-level Ufa leaders and some of their wives and children into Meghalaya on Wednesday night, police have said. Bangladesh Deputy High Commissioner Roohul Alam Siddiqui called upon the Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah at the Chief Minister’s House on Monday. According to an official handout, he expressed his sorrow over the destruction caused by recent floods and assured that Bangladesh would help the affected people of the Sindh province. At least 25 people, including policemen, were injured in a clash between students of a private university and law enforcers on Mirpur Road in the capital on Saturday morning. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wednesday urged the US lawmakers to adopt the New Partnership for Development Act moved by Congressman Jim McDermott and allow Bangladesh's duty-and quota- free access to American market as an LDC. India has given a loan of \$1 billion at nominal rate of interest to Bangladesh, and there is a perception that Awami league has sold Bangladesh for this petty amount and bartered away its sovereignty. Since the days of united Pakistan, Awami League in cahoots with India had sown the seeds of hatred between former East Pakistan and West Pakistan by highlighting the contradictions that could have been resolved as is the case in many countries of the world. Bangladesh is set to establish environment courts in 64 districts as the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has placed the Environment Court Bill 2010 in the Parliament, seeking provisions for allowing citizens to file cases against polluters and for setting up at least one environment court in each district. The emissions and atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases are rising, there are signs of rapidly increasing average surface temperatures, and scientists have detected diagnostic signals such as greater high-latitude warming that are distinguishing predictions of this particular type of warming. Recent evidence and model predictions suggest that global mean surface temperature will rise sharply in the next century and beyond. Bangladesh recorded one-fourth of the total global fatality due to thunderbolt in last one year, as it claimed lives of over 100 people, mostly women and children. According to US National Lightning Safety Institute (NLSI), total global annual deaths due to thunder strike is around 400. Bangladesh’s exports in August surged 31.25 percent to \$1.79 billion from a year earlier, led by strong demand for the country’s readymade garments, data showed on

Thursday. Bangladesh is going to import 300, 000 tons of rice and 200,000 tons of wheat from India by next month, an official of the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management said. The first day of the Bangladesh-Myanmar Joint Trade Commission meeting in Dhaka had discussed extension of banking facilities and visa issues successfully, Commerce Secretary Md Ghulam Hossain told reporters yesterday. Ministry of Finance (MoF) announced today that the UAE has signed an initial agreement with the Republic of Bangladesh for investment protection and promotion.

Nepal: Caretaker Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal Friday expressed there is no immediate possibility of unity among communist parties to end the current political deadlock created due to the ongoing PM election fiasco in the nation. President Dr. Ram Baran Yadav Friday asked all the political parties to remain dedicated towards institutionalising democracy in the nation by ending the politics of violence. Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal dropped the idea of leading Nepali delegation to New York to address the 65th UN General Assembly after Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon refused to meet him. The vote counting for the Central Working Committee (CWC) seats of of Nepali Congress is underway at the party headquarters in Sanepa, Friday afternoon. The Nepali Congress has described the recent three-point agreement between the Unified CPN (Maoist) and the UML as a 'conspiracy'. A meeting of the NC parliamentary party on Friday concluded that the agreement last week was a conspiracy and that it would not resolve the current political stalemate. Twenty one persons have been elected as Central Working Committee (CWC) members of the Nepali Congress (NC) from the quotas reserved for women, Madhesis, Janajatis and Dalits. The Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (UCPN-M) and the Communist Party Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) have requested House Speaker Subas Nemwang to play an active role to end the "meaningless" prime ministerial election. Unable to give the country a new prime minister even after seven rounds of election and facing growing criticism, Nepal's precariously aligned ruling parties are now grappling with an old fear – that of deposed King Gyanendra making a comeback. Less than a fortnight after the opposition. With the Nepali Congress remaining adamant not to withdraw its candidate, Nepal appeared to be headed for a continued political impasse with tomorrow's eighth round of election unlikely to throw up a new Prime Minister. The Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoTCA) along with Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) will celebrate 31st World Tourism Day on September 27 with the global theme, "Tourism and Biodiversity". Nepal's caretaker government is set to ink an agreement with Indian construction major GMR and its consortium for the 900 MW Upper Karnali hydropower project despite warnings by the former Maoist guerrillas that they would oppose it as well as 13 other projects, mostly involving Indian investors. Nepal stood at 121st position securing 5.54 among the 141 economies in the Economic Freedom of the World Report. Democratic National Alliance (DNA) parliamentarian Vijitha Herath and opposition and United National Party (UNP) leader Ranil Wickremasinghe had raised the issue of breaching former Army Commander and DNA MP Sarath Fonseka's parliamentary privileges in Sri Lanka's parliament today. The magistrate's court of the Sri Lankan capital

Colombo ordered the release of four aides of the former army chief Sarath Fonseka who was convicted of corruption and conspiring to topple the country's government. Sri Lanka Opposition Leader Ranil Wickremasinghe today publicly denounced the charges brought by the government against former Army Commander and current parliamentarian retired General Sarath Fonseka and tore off a mock charge sheet. Sri Lanka's Democratic National Alliance (DNA) Sunday called on religious leaders and the public to come forward to protect the rights of former Army Commander and DNA Leader retired General Sarath Fonseka. Fonseka's wife, Anoma Fonseka told a press conference today that she did not expect justice for her husband from the President. She said that military officers have betrayed their uniforms to follow the orders of the country's highest authority. Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa this morning met with the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in New York on the sidelines of the 65th session of the General Assembly. Sri Lanka's main opposition United National Party (UNP) today said the party would take the initiative with other opposition parties in parliament to take the government injustices against former Army Commander and DNA Leader retired General Sarath Fonseka before the International Courts. The leadership hopeful of Sri Lanka's main opposition United National Party (UNP), Hambantota District MP Sajith Premadasa has received the support of local government members in several districts. Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa today said that large scale drug dealers made their businesses freely absconding the prevailing laws while drug addicts were punished with life imprisonment. The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Friday completed the fourth review of Sri Lanka's economic performance under the Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) and approved an immediate disbursement of about US\$ 212.5 million. Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa today called for a genuine commitment to fulfill donor obligations to assist developing countries as the recent global economic and financial crisis has severely reduced the access to external resources and private capital flows for them. Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa who is attending the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly is to hold several bilateral discussions with other Heads of States. Sri Lanka can achieve better economic development in the near future. Bilateral relations between our two countries keep on strengthening, said Chinese Ambassador in Sri Lanka Yang Xiuping addressing a gathering to commemorate the 61st National Day of the People's Republic of China at New Town Hall, Colombo yesterday.

## **Detailed News**

### **Dhaka hands over rebels**

Bangladesh “pushed back” 15 middle-level Ulfa leaders and some of their wives and children into Meghalaya on Wednesday night, police have said. The BSF today handed them over to Assam police, who were bringing them to Guwahati in six vehicles, sources said. Bangladesh’s move, coinciding with a Dhaka visit by an Indian delegation headed by BSF chief Raman Srivastava, is being seen as a renewed offensive against Ulfa. But Ulfa leader Jiten Dutta, who has come overground in Assam seeking peace talks with the government, said these 15 leaders

had left the outfit following differences with commander-in-chief Paresh Barua. "This indicates that a majority of Ulfa leaders want peace talks but have been forced to stay with the outfit because of Barua, who is against talks," Dutta said. Barua claimed in an email that some "cadres" and their family members had "fled" their camps with the help of Indian intelligence and the support of "two of our senior jailed leaders". Sources in Dhaka said the rebels and their relatives were "picked up" from their bases in Bangladesh. The handover came at Halchati in Meghalaya's West Garo Hills district. There is some confusion about the exact number of the deportees, with some sources claiming there were at least 28 of them, including eight women and five children. The surrendered leaders' names are yet to be released but Dutta claimed they included "captains" Pradyut Gohain, Apurba Baruah, Arpan Saikia and Biju Deka and "lieutenant" Anu Borgohain. In the past one year, the Hasina Wajed government has handed over to the BSF several top Ulfa leaders, including chairman Arabinda Rajkhowa and deputy commander-in-chief Raju Barua, and top Bodo militant Ranjan Daimary. Since the two countries lack an extradition treaty, the BSF had claimed the militants had "surrendered" on being challenged by its personnel at the Meghalaya border.

[http://www.telegraphindia.com/1100925/jsp/nation/story\\_12980116.jsp](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1100925/jsp/nation/story_12980116.jsp)

### **Bangladesh deputy high commissioner meets Qaim**

KARACHI: Bangladesh Deputy High Commissioner Roohul Alam Siddiqui called upon the Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah at the Chief Minister's House on Monday. According to an official handout, he expressed his sorrow over the destruction caused by recent floods and assured that Bangladesh would help the affected people of the Sindh province. Siddiqui informed that a 40-member medical team from Bangladesh was treating the ailing affectees in flood relief camps of Hyderabad and the Bangladeshi government would contribute \$2 million for the welfare and relief work. The chief minister said a large number of people have been affected by floods while various countries were assisting the flood-affected people. He also thanked the Government of Bangladesh for extending assistance for the flood affectees of Sindh. staff report

[http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C09%5C21%5Cstory\\_21-9-2010\\_pg12\\_10](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C09%5C21%5Cstory_21-9-2010_pg12_10)

### **25 hurt in student-cop clash in city**

At least 25 people, including policemen, were injured in a clash between students of a private university and law enforcers on Mirpur Road in the capital on Saturday morning. Police picked up six students and two teachers of World University of Bangladesh in front of the LabAid Hospital and took them to Dhanmondi Police Station, Officer-in-Charge of the police station Shah Alam said. Witnesses said the university students formed a human chain at about 10:00am and later blocked the road protesting the death of a fellow student in a road accident on Friday.

At one stage, the law enforcers rushed to the spot and asked the students to withdraw the barricade. Being resisted, the students of the university located near the LabAid Hospital pelted brick chips on the policemen. The law enforcers charged truncheons on the demonstrators that triggered a clash and left 25 people injured, including the OC and Assistant Commissioner Afrozul Haq and Sub-inspector Aksed Ali. Of the injured cops, three were admitted to the LabAid Hospital. The students went back inside the university and locked the collapsible gate from inside, the OC said. Some 200 policemen have been deployed on the road fearing further clash. Mustafizur Rahman, 25, a first year student of Machatronics department of World University was crushed under the wheels of a pick up van on Friday. Following the death, about 150 students of the university blocked the road for one and a half hours on the day demanding a speed breaker in the area.

[http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest\\_news.php?nid=26050](http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=26050)

### **PM seeks expansion of GSP facility, more US investment**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wednesday urged the US lawmakers to adopt the New Partnership for Development Act moved by Congressman Jim McDermott and allow Bangladesh's duty-and quota-free access to American market as an LDC. She said USA is the largest investor in Bangladesh's energy, power, manufactures, life insurance, banking and services, and sought more US investment, which is vital for the country's development and progress. "Bangladesh looks on USA as a trusted ally, and a major development and trading partner," Hasina said at a business meeting with the US Chamber of Commerce at Four Seasons Restaurant here. She appreciated the US for consistently helping Bangladesh in socio-economic development, democratic institutions building, countering terrorism, and empowering women. She, however, said although around 27 per cent of Bangladesh's exports amounting to US\$ 3.2 billion entered the US market in 2009, it was a mere 0.24 per cent of USA's annual import. The Prime Minister said the GSP facility enjoyed by Bangladesh as an LDC on some of the products (in exporting them to USA) has been helpful. "We are now looking forward to its expansion to cover more of our export items," she said, adding USA remains the only developed country withholding these facilities to the Asian LDCs. About the increase in Bangladesh's apparel exports to USA, she said it is critical for economic development and empowerment of women who comprise about 85 per cent of the workers in the RMG sector. "Women's employment has dramatically changed their lives, and brought visible improvement in children's education, health, and in the overall socio-economic condition of the country," she told the US business leaders. The Prime Minister said Bangladesh has made good progress in labour compliance issues, including the recent increase in the minimum wages of RMG workers by 80 per cent. She said the recent renewed interest for conclusion of a US "Trade and Investment Framework Agreement" with Bangladesh, and the US proposal for establishing a "US-Bangladesh Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum" for increasing trade and investment between the two countries are very encouraging trends. On US investment, she said recently

some 13 projects under joint venture with US investors have been registered with the Board of Investment (BoI).

[http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news\\_id=112624&date=2010-09-23](http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news_id=112624&date=2010-09-23)

### **Awami League sells Bangladesh**

India has given a loan of \$1 billion at nominal rate of interest to Bangladesh, and there is a perception that Awami league has sold Bangladesh for this petty amount and bartered away its sovereignty. Since the days of united Pakistan, Awami League in cahoots with India had sown the seeds of hatred between former East Pakistan and West Pakistan by highlighting the contradictions that could have been resolved as is the case in many countries of the world. India had created Mukti Bahini and imparted training to its cadres; stoked insurgency in former East Pakistan, and then by sending Indian troops in support of Mukti Bahini Pakistan was dismembered. People of Bangladesh however did not accept Indian hegemony, and India used to criticize Khalida Zia's government, and it also often reminded that Bangladeshis had forgotten what India had done for their independence. Anyhow, India continues with its shenanigans and uses all tricks and ruses to control its smaller neighbours like Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. However, Indian leadership considers Pakistan as a stumbling block in its designs to extend its hegemony in the region. Previous Bangladesh governments had done quite well to make Bangladesh somewhat self-reliant; and its social indicators were better than other members of the SAARC including India. But puppet government of Hasina Wajid is trying to undo what was achieved in the past. Last month, there were protests by private university students over imposition of VAT (value added tax) on their tuition fees in Bangladesh's budget for fiscal year 2010-11. On one hand, Awami League government is trying to generate revenue by taxing education sector, on the other it has given more than 135 crore taka tax exemptions (transfer fees) by allowing Bharati Airtel to purchase \$ 650 million dollars (50 million paid for license and 600 million invested) Warid Telecom at virtually no cost (\$100k). Unlike all other foreign operators who paid tax on purchase, Bharati Airtel was exempted from tax depriving Bangladesh of more than 135 crore taka in tax. Questions are being asked as for whom Awami League government works – for Indian interest or Bangladeshis. By now, all and sundry are aware that Prime Minister Hasina Wajid is an Indian puppet, and is likely to advance India's interest to the neglect of national interest. India had also given loan to Nepal and Sri Lanka, but the latter has refused to accept India's demands that it should not buy its defence-related equipment from Pakistan and China. India is trying to destabilize Nepal through its 'ally' Nepal's National Congress. In five rounds of elections prime minister could not be elected because of India's clout. A few years ago, India used to support Maoists of Nepal because it wanted to get rid of the king, but now India is wary of Maoists because it is feeling the heat from India's Maoists and Naxalites. It is because of Indian clout that Nepal's caretaker Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal has said the Unified CPN (Maoist) should be answerable to the present situation of the country as the current deadlock arose due to the stubbornness of the Maoists. Talking to reporters at the Constituent Assembly (CA) premises, after the sixth round of

elections also failed to elect a PM he said that the Maoists should take the responsibility of the present situation as they had claimed they would forge a consensus within two hours of my resignation. The row had started when Maoists demanded that its militants should be inducted in the armed forces, which was rejected by Nepal's army chief. India has long been influential in Nepal, which it regards as a buffer against China. Roughly half of Nepal's trade is with it and the country ties its currency to the Indian rupee. China has so far played a low-key role in Nepal but the emergence of the Maoists as the largest party has shifted the balance, and India is now more close to the anti-Maoist faction. The Prime Minister, Madhav Kumar Nepal, says India's government distrusts them and wants the party to make sweeping changes to its organisation and beliefs. Parliamentary elections in 2008 gave the Maoists 40% of members of parliament, twice as many as their nearest rival. During a brief stint in government, the Maoists cultivated closer relations with China, much to India's chagrin. The Maoist-led coalition had collapsed last year, to be replaced by an anti-Maoist one backed by India, rather cobbled together by it. Anti-Maoists are challenging the peace agreements while parliament has been deadlocked since June over the election of a new prime minister. But India continues to exert pressure on Nepal through its proxies. Senior staff at the country's largest newspaper group, which Indian diplomats think hostile to their country, say they have been unable to get newsprint through India and that Indian companies have been asked to withdraw advertising. Some Nepalese intellectuals are of the opinion that Nepal being a landlocked country would economically suffer if India did not allow trade through India. But this is a flawed perception because China has already given alternative route to Nepal through Tibet – LASHA, and now Nepal cannot be blackmailed any more. Meanwhile, the UCPN (Maoist) has announced its withdrawal of candidacy from the prime ministerial elections to initiate a new process in electing the prime minister. Top leaders of the UCPN (M) and UML agreed on a three-point agreement in a meeting on Friday. As per the agreement, UML will have to stick to its previous neutral position. A joint statement signed by UML chairman Jhala Nath Khanal and Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal said that the failure of the parliament to elect the new PM for the seventh time has worried the people, and that this process has not given a positive solution for the current deadlock. During the meeting, the leaders also emphasized the need for a consensus government and agreed to urge National Congress (NC) to withdraw its candidacy in order to initiate a new selection of consensus candidates for the position of PM. The UML will remain neutral during the election even if NC does not withdraw from the race. Though Ram Chandra Poudel of National Congress will be a lone candidate and no competitor for the post of prime minister, he will have to secure a majority in the parliament, which is impossible without the support of UML and the Madhesi alliance. Prashant Jha in his article in Nepal Times said that the Nepali state must be sensitive to Delhi's security concerns; but he did not identify those 'security concerns'. He however was candid in writing: "While Indian growth remains robust, the sense of being under siege is once again unmistakable in power corridors in the Indian capital. For four months now, street protests have rocked Kashmir. The administration is confused and repressive handling of the situation has led to further alienation, which the separatist leadership has

capitalised on. Security experts also predict that the Maoists will continue to have a fertile constituency as a result of inequitable state policies, and urban areas may be targeted”.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=53230>

### **Bangladesh set to establish 6 environment courts**

Bangladesh is set to establish environment courts in 64 districts as the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has placed the Environment Court Bill 2010 in the Parliament, seeking provisions for allowing citizens to file cases against polluters and for setting up at least one environment court in each district. The government has also placed the Climate Change Trust Bill 2010 in the legislature. The Environment Court Bill stipulates a maximum punishment of five years of imprisonment or 5,00,000 taka in fine or both for people guilty of polluting the environment. State minister for environment and forest Hasan Mahmud placed the Bill in the House against the backdrop of widespread pollution of air and water across Bangladesh. The Bill proposed an amendment to the law making provisions for establishment of an environment court in each district headquarters. The Bill also proposed a provision for allowing any aggrieved person to sue a polluter and demand compensation. The new bill proposed another provision to empower the director general of the Department of Environment to dispose of any case, even if it is pending with an environment court, through mediation between the plaintiff and the accused. The Cabinet on July 19 approved the draft Bill seeking amendments to the Environment Court Act 2000. According to the existing Environment Court Act 2000, an aggrieved person has to apply to the Department of Environment to seeking redress for pollution, and no court can take cognisance of any offence of pollution without a report submitted by an inspector in writing. It stipulates provisions for setting up environment courts in the divisional headquarters with joint district judges. Only four courts have so far been established in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Sylhet.

[http://ftpapp.app.com.pk/en\\_/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=116598&Itemid=2](http://ftpapp.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=116598&Itemid=2)

### **Global warming -- a matter of serious concern for Bangladesh**

The core problem is that the burning of fossil (carbon-based) fuels such as coal, oil, and natural gas leads to emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). Gases like CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O, and CFC which are called greenhouse gases (GHGs) accumulate in the atmosphere and have a very long residence time, in the order of 100 years. Higher concentrations of GHGs lead to surface warming of the land and oceans. In the long run, this produces profound changes in many earth systems and consequently to biological and human activities that are sensitive to the climate. While the exact future pace and extent of warming is highly uncertain, particularly beyond the next few decades, there can be little scientific doubt that the world has embarked on a major series of geophysical changes that are unprecedented for the last few thousand years. Scientists

have detected the early symptoms of this syndrome clearly in several areas. The emissions and atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases are rising, there are signs of rapidly increasing average surface temperatures, and scientists have detected diagnostic signals such as greater high-latitude warming that are distinguishing predictions of this particular type of warming. Recent evidence and model predictions suggest that global mean surface temperature will rise sharply in the next century and beyond. The fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), published in 2007, gives a best estimate of the temperature change over the coming century at from 1.8 to 4.0°C. While this seems like a small change, it is much more rapid than any changes that have occurred for more than 10,000 years. How temperature is rising over the years Global emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2006 were estimated to be around 7½ billion tonnes of carbon. It will be helpful to bring this astronomical number down to the level of the household. Suppose that you drive 10,000 miles a year in a car that gets 28 miles per gallon. Your car will emit about 1 tonne of carbon per year. While the present study focuses on carbon weight, other studies sometimes discuss emissions in terms of tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, which has a weight of 3.67 times the weight of carbon. In this case, your automobile emissions are about 4 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. On the side of climate damages, our knowledge is poor. For most of the time span of human civilisations, global climatic patterns have stayed within a very narrow range, varying at most a few tenths of a degree Centigrade (°C) from century to century. Human settlements, along with their ecosystems and pests, have generally adapted to the climates and geophysical features they have grown up with. However, those human and natural systems that are "unmanaged," such as rain-fed agriculture, seasonal snow packs and river runoffs, and most natural ecosystems, may be significantly affected. While economic studies in this area are subject to large uncertainties, the best guess in this study is that economic damages from climate change with no interventions will be in the order of 2½ percent of world output per year by the end of the 21st century. The damages are likely to be most heavily concentrated in low-income and tropical regions such as tropical Africa, Bangladesh & India. While some countries may benefit from climate change, there is likely to be significant disruption in any area that is closely tied to climate-sensitive physical systems, whether through rivers, ports, hurricanes, monsoons, permafrost, pests, diseases, frosts, or droughts. While scientists have been analysing global warming for more than half a century, nations took the first formal steps about fifteen years ago to slow global warming under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The first binding international agreement on climate change, the Kyoto Protocol, came into effect in 2005, and the first period for emissions reductions, 2008-2012, is at hand. The framework for implementing the Protocol is most solidly institutionalized in the European Union's Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS), which covers almost half of Europe's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Unfortunately Bangladesh would likely to be one of the worst sufferers due to climate change while the country is less industrialised as well as uses less fossil fuel than developed countries. A combination of geography and demography puts it among the countries that specialists predict it will be hardest hit as the earth heats up although its own carbon footprint is small. The root cause of most of its global warming problems lies in the heavily industrialised

world. Yet, as sea levels rise only a little Bangladesh will pay a heavy price. As a low-lying tropical country Bangladesh is on the front line of the consequences of global warming. Already the storms are becoming more violent. Recent erratic rainfall and many deaths in Chittagong hill tracks due to landslides are also signs of forthcoming catastrophes

[http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news\\_id=112742&date=2010-09-25](http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news_id=112742&date=2010-09-25)

### **Bangladesh records one-fourth of global deaths due to thunder strike**

Bangladesh recorded one-fourth of the total global fatality due to thunderbolt in last one year, as it claimed lives of over 100 people, mostly women and children. According to US National Lightning Safety Institute (NLSI), total global annual deaths due to thunder strike is around 400. However, local administration sources said thunderbolts in Bangladesh claimed lives of at least 102 persons in one year till date and injuring many others, while many incidents remained unreported. In the eight districts of northern Rangpur Division, at least 48 persons were killed and 35 suffered serious burn injuries while 42 persons died in three hill districts and nine in Khulna division during the period. The worst incident of lightning happened in Chapainawabganj in May this year when a total of nine including six children died in a single day as they were struck by lightning during nor'wester."Many of the victims are farmers, who met their tragic end at the time of cultivation in the field and a large number of them are women and children, who died when thunderbolt struck their homes made off thatches and bamboo," said Police Super of Khagrachhari hill district, where 18 persons died in thunderbolts this year. He, however, said the deaths may be more as officially they do not keep record of deaths in thunderbolt separately. Sources said more deaths might be added to the list of thunder strikes deaths if scrutinized meticulously."Police record such a killing as unnatural death when anybody brings it to our notice," he said adding most of such death cases remain unreported. Thunder is always associated with lightning and thunder is the shockwave created by super heated air in the lightning channel. According to Climate Change Connection (CCC), a hub for information about climate change in Canada, thunderstorms and their destructive winds are likely to become more frequent and severe due to climate change."Longer and hotter summers generate warmer surface temperatures, causing the air to become more buoyant, and the air, laden with moisture from increased evaporation, rises into the atmosphere more rapidly and more often causing lighting," it said. According to the US National Lightning Safety Institute (NLSI), there are about 15-20 million lightning strikes per year in the USA and more than three million lightning flashes worldwide per day. Florida has the most strikes with about 12 per square kilometer in some places. The risk of being killed by lightning is 1:28,500 per exposed individual, according to the NLSI. Lightning heat exceeds 50,000 degrees Fahrenheit or three times hotter than the surface of the sun. The worst tragic incident of lightning happened in Africa in the fall 1998 when an entire football team of 11 players were killed by a lightning strike. The high fatality of women and children in Bangladesh due to lightning shows lack of safety in dwelling houses and working places particularly in rural areas, district administration officials said. Although there is no universal lightning risk management code, the US National Center for Atmospheric Research

(NCAR) in its new guideline recommended 30 seconds to take shelter as soon as one notices lightning flash, saying a thunder takes five seconds to travel one mile. Additional risk management includes the use of conventional lightning rods and overhead shield wires and mast systems. Local sources also termed the plantation of trees particularly the variety of green coconut in and around homestead as one of the remedy to be saved from lightning. The NCAR said, lightning could strike through telephones, except for the cellular variety. One should avoid taking showers or standing by windows, screen, or doorway. To protect household appliances, one should unplug them before storms and get away from isolated trees, metal fences, wire clotheslines, and avoid standing in an exposed area or near water. The safest form of traveling in vehicle during thunderbolt is keeping the windows fully closed, NCAR said adding severe thunderstorms generally strike at day time, in the warmer months and late evening.

<http://nation.ittefaq.com/issues/2010/09/22/news0884.htm>

### **Bangladesh exports jump 31% in August**

DHAKA: Bangladesh's exports in August surged 31.25 percent to \$1.79 billion from a year earlier, led by strong demand for the country's readymade garments, data showed on Thursday. In the fiscal year that ended in June, exports rose 4.11 percent to \$16.2 billion as the global economy gradually recovered, although that was still 7.9 percent below the government's target amount. Sales in July rose 26.5 percent to \$1.82 billion, the impoverished south Asian country's highest ever. Earning from knit textiles in July-August, the first two months of the current fiscal year, rose 32 percent to nearly \$1.6 billion from the previous year, while woven garments rose 30 percent to \$1.3 billion, the Export Promotion Bureau said. Orders for clothes, which account for 80 percent of Bangladesh's overseas sales, are growing from its key markets the United States and Europe. Traders and officials said the garment sector had seen a steady recovery since January, along with the recovery in the global economy. Bangladesh is fast becoming part of the global supply chain for low-end textiles and clothing because of its cheap labour costs. In late July, the government nearly doubled the minimum monthly wage for millions of workers in the garment industry to 3,000 taka (\$43), which will take effect in November, but wages are still low compared with rivals such as China, India, Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia. Bangladesh makes garments for international brands such as JC Penney, Wal-Mart, H&M, Kohl's, Marks & Spencer and Carrefour. Meanwhile, the government has increased the amount of credits available, cut tax and offered cash incentives to explore new markets to garments exporters. reuters The government expects exports to climb 14 percent this fiscal year to \$18.5 billion, with targets of \$7 billion from knitwear and \$6.6 billion from woven garments

[http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C09%5C24%5Cstory\\_24-9-2010\\_pg5\\_35](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C09%5C24%5Cstory_24-9-2010_pg5_35)

## **Bangladesh to Import 500,000 Tons of Rice, Wheat from India**

Bangladesh is going to import 300, 000 tons of rice and 200,000 tons of wheat from India by next month, an official of the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management said here Saturday. Director General of Directorate of Food under the ministry Ahmed Hossain was quoted by official news agency BSS as saying that price has been fixed at 436 U.S. dollars for import of per ton of rice and 336 U.S. dollars for per ton of wheat. The initiative to import rice and wheat from the neighboring India is the follow-up of the visit by a Bangladesh delegation led by Food Secretary Mitra to India on August 24-26. "India agreed to Bangladesh's proposal that the delivery would be on CIF LO (Liner out) basis. It was mutually agreed that the insurance cover for the export cargo till discharge port would be borne by the seller," said a statement issued from New Delhi and was quoted by BSS

<http://english.cri.cn/6966/2010/09/25/2724s596303.htm>

## **Bangladesh-Myanmar trade meet Banking facilities, visa issue, electricity import discussed**

The first day of the Bangladesh-Myanmar Joint Trade Commission meeting in Dhaka had discussed extension of banking facilities and visa issues successfully, Commerce Secretary Md Ghulam Hossain told reporters yesterday. The meeting also discussed electricity import from Myanmar and other issues. Various problems relating to import and export trade from the two countries were also discussed during the meeting. It decided to raise the limit of each letter of credit volume up to US\$50,000 from the existing US\$20,000. Hossain said extension of visa facilities for businessmen would get importance in the meeting. They have discussed allowing Bangladeshi businessmen to Myanmar capital Naypyidaw and other cities. At present Bangladeshi businessmen can enter up to Mongdu with a seven days' visa. The two-day meeting is taking place at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel where Deputy Minister for Commerce of Myanmar Brigadier General Aung Tun is leading 18-member Myanmar delegation while Commerce Secretary Md Ghulam Hossain is leading a large Bangladeshi delegation. Brigadier General Aung Tun at the meeting expressed their interest to set up a hydro-electric power station in Arakan state. "They are planning to export electricity to Bangladesh from the power station". He said if needed Bangladesh would be able to import up to 400 megawatt electricity from Myanmar. The delegation members have informed the meeting that Myanmar was now unable to give Bangladesh lease farm lands or set up power station in joint investment

<http://nation.ittefaq.com/issues/2010/09/23/news0054.htm>.

## **UAE signs initial agreement with Bangladesh on investment protection and promotion**

Ministry of Finance (MoF) announced today that the UAE has signed an initial agreement with the Republic of Bangladesh for investment protection and promotion.

The agreement is part of MoF efforts to improve financial relations with other countries and was signed by HE Khalid Ali Al Bustani, Executive Director of International Financial Relations Sector at MoF, on behalf of UAE, and Ms. Ovruga Khan, Deputy Secretary in the Bangladesh Ministry of Industry in the presence of HE Younis Haji Al Khoori, Director General of the Ministry of Finance and HE The Ambassador of Bangladesh to the UAE. The agreement aims at encouraging the mobility of capital between the two countries. It creates a positive investment climate that will enhance the flow of investments while protecting them from the risk of nationalization and confiscation. It also outlines the process of transfer of profits, interest and returns from investments via any currency that can be converted immediately without delay. These returns include revenues and profits of national air carriers. The agreement includes provisions for the settlement of disputes and for application of investment conventions. The provisions do not apply to disputes that arose before the signing of the agreement or to conflicts resolved at a previous date. An initial agreement to avoid double taxation on income has already been signed between the two countries in Dhaka in May 2010. Final ratification of both the agreements is expected to be done at the earliest as they are an integral part of the legal framework for UAE public and private sector investments and will protect them from risk. They remove or reduce taxes on UAE investments and will ensure increased public and private investments in both countries.

<http://www.ameinfo.com/242750.html>

## **Nepal**

### **No possibility of unity among leftists: PM Nepal**

Caretaker Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal Friday expressed there is no immediate possibility of unity among communist parties to end the current political deadlock created due to the ongoing PM election fiasco in the nation. Hinting to recent hearsay that Unified CPN-Maoist chairperson Puspha Kamal Dahal and UML chairman Jhala Nath Khanal had informally discussed about unity between two major communist parties, PM Nepal said both the parties have their own responsibilities to shoulder in order to achieve a new constitution and complete the peace process. "Thus, no unity is possible," he said. PM Nepal termed those reports about the so-called unity as baseless. Nepal claimed that UML and UCPN (M) have shown sacrifice by agreeing on the recent three-point pact. However, he ruled out a Maoist-led government until it turns into a civilian party and returns the seized public properties. "We should now ask Nepali Congress PM candidate, Ram Chandra Poudel, to back out from contesting in the eighth round of prime ministerial election slated for September 26," PM Nepal said, adding, "UML and the Maoists have already played their part."

<http://www.nepalnews.com/main/index.php/news-archive/1-top-story/9389-no-possibility-of-unity-among-leftists-pm-nepal.html>

### **President Yadav urges end to politics of violence**

President Dr. Ram Baran Yadav Friday asked all the political parties to remain dedicated towards institutionalising democracy in the nation by ending the politics of violence. Inaugurating the Youth Solidarity Festival 2010, Gopal Rajbhandari Memorial Staff Residence building and Mohan Gopal Khetan Memorial Ladies Hostel of Kathmandu University (KU) at Dhulikhel, President Yadav expressed that the present democratic achievement must be safeguarded to completely end the politics of violence. "There is no alternative to institutionalising the hard-earned democratic system," the President said, "Students must remain aloof from the current bad politics and instead focus on their studies." According to President Yadav, major parties in the nation have bigger role to play to establish democratic norms. He also said the statute writing and peace process have remained in the back burner due to political bickering. "For achieving prosperity and true democracy, violence free political activities are essential." Meanwhile, vice chancellor of KU Prof. Dr. Suresh Raj Sharma said, the University has reached its present status although no government support has been made available. Sharma informed that the University is simply progressing on support and grants from various donors. Member of Parliament and industrialist Rajendra Khetan said, his late father's dreams have come true as the Khetan funded ladies hostel was formally inaugurated. The University's staff residence building was donated in the name of late Gopal Raj Bhandari by his son and Chief Executive Officer of the Mercantile Communications Pvt. Ltd. Sanjib Raj Bhandari. The newly inaugurated staff residence has 14 apartments for the staff's family while the hostel has housing facilities for 66 girl students

### **Ban refused to meet PM**

Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal dropped the idea of leading Nepali delegation to New York to address the 65th UN General Assembly after Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon refused to meet him. Two sources at Nepal's Permanent Mission to UN in New York and at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) confirmed that the PM had sought a meeting with Ban on the sidelines. However, the Secretary General declined to meet him as he had done last year. An official at the mission told this daily that Ban refused to meet 'caretaker' prime minister in the wake of war of words between Nepali government and UN Mission in Nepal over the latter's role in monitoring Maoist combatants. Another official at MoFA said, "We had made several attempts to fix PM's meeting with Ban, but to no avail." PM's Foreign Affairs Adviser Rajan Bhattarai claimed that the PM skipped the trip, as he wanted to engage himself in taking forward the peace process. He said it was a "normal diplomatic practice" to seek a meeting with Secretary-General while a head of government of its member-state planned to visit UN summit.

<http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=Ban+refused+to+meet+PM+&NewSID=259096&a=3>

### **Vote counting for NC CWC members continues**

The vote counting for the Central Working Committee (CWC) seats of of Nepali Congress is underway at the party headquarters in Sanepa, Friday afternoon. The party's election committee members are counting the votes for the CWC reserved seats for Dalits, Madhesis, women and indigenous communities. A total of 161 representatives contested for 22 reserved seats and at least 40 are vying from women reservation seats. According to the election committee, counting of votes for regional quotas and open contest candidates will start once the reserved seats are over, which is not expected too early today. As per the provision, the CWC will have 25 members elected in open competition and 14 members from the zones. Meanwhile, a booth has been added today to speed up the vote counting. Prior to this, election committee members were counting the votes from just two booths.

### **NC sees 'conspiracy' behind Maoist-UML deal**

The Nepali Congress has described the recent three-point agreement between the Unified CPN (Maoist) and the UML as a 'conspiracy'. A meeting of the NC parliamentary party on Friday concluded that the agreement last week was a conspiracy and that it would not resolve the current political stalemate. Speaking to reporters after the meeting, NC spokesperson Arjun Narsingh K.C said the party was suspicious of the Maoist-UML agreement as it was not consulted on issues agreed between the two community parties. The agreement was more of an agreement between the leaders, not between the political parties, he argued. Hinting that the NC's prime ministerial candidate Ram Chandra Poudel will not withdraw his candidacy anytime soon, K.C said the PM election cannot be terminated at this juncture. As per the three-point agreement, Maoist chairman and PM candidate Pushpa Kamal Dahal will withdraw his candidacy while the UML will also back out of election process. The two communist parties also agreed to take 'new initiative' for consensus on government formation

### **21 elected as NC CWC members from reserved quotas**

Twenty one persons have been elected as Central Working Committee (CWC) members of the Nepali Congress (NC) from the quotas reserved for women, Madhesis, Janajatis and Dalits. Results of the five Janajati quotas (three male and two female) were announced Saturday afternoon. Those elected from Janajati quotas are Bhimsa Raj Aangdambe, Surya Man Gurung, Dhan Raj Gurung, Sita Gurung and Ratna Sherchan. Similarly, Pushpa Bhusal, Mina Pande, Kamala Pant, Ambika Basnet, Mahalaxmi Upadhyaya 'Deena' and Uma Regmi got elected from the women quota. 40 candidates had contested for CWC member from the women quota. Bhusal received 1502, Pande 1413, Pant 1268, Basnet 1088, Upadhyaya 1007, and Regmi got 831 votes. Likewise, Man Bahadur Bishwakarma, Jiwan Pariyar and Min Bishwakarma were elected from the Dalit quota. Sujata Pariyar and Kavita Sardar were elected from Dalit women quota. Uma Kant Chaudhary, Ajaya Chaurasiya and Mahendra Yadav were elected from Madhesi quota. Minakchhi Jha and Parbati DC Chaudhary were elected from Madhesi women quota.

Earlier, Mohammad Aftab Alam was elected from Muslim quota. The counting of votes for indigenous communities will continue on Saturday. The counting for the post of CWC members under zonal reservation and open contest will begin after completion of the reserved quotas.

### **Nepali Speaker urged to help end "meaningless" PM election**

The Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (UCPN-M) and the Communist Party Nepal- Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) have requested House Speaker Subas Nemwang to play an active role to end the "meaningless" prime ministerial election. According to a Kathmandu Post report, the UCPN-M and CPN-UML wrote separately to Nemwang. "Chiefs of the both parties (UCPN-M and CPN-UML) informed me about their earlier decision to go for new consensus course but I told them to convince the Nepali Congress to withdraw its candidacy before starting a new process," Nemwang told reporters after receiving the letters from the parties. The Speaker argued that there is no other way but to continue with the election unless one of the contestants wins a majority vote in the House or both candidates agree to pull out of the poll process. <http://news.oneindia.in/2010/09/24/nepalispeaker-urged-to-help-end-meaningless-pm-election.html>

### **Nepal parties' royal fears die hard**

Unable to give the country a new prime minister even after seven rounds of election and facing growing criticism, Nepal's precariously aligned ruling parties are now grappling with an old fear – that of deposed King Gyanendra making a comeback. Less than a fortnight after the opposition Maoists tried to disrupt the former king's religious programme in eastern Nepal and kicked up a row about his daughter-in-law Himani's public appearance in the north, the caretaker government of Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal stopped the last king of Nepal from attending a religious programme in the capital on Tuesday on the ground of security. Ironically, the restriction came even as Nepal was celebrating International Peace Day and the prime minister's official speech touted the measures taken by his government to take the peace process forward. "His Majesty was to have been the chief guest at a programme today," an aide of the former king, who did not want to be named, told TNN. "It had no political connotations, being purely a religious programme. However, the government said he should not attend the programme. We are distressed because it is a violation of his rights as a citizen of Nepal." The Yuva Vishwa Hindu Mahasangh, a pro-Hindu group, had organised a felicitation programme at Basantapur, the location of the old palace of the Shah kings, as well as the palace of the Kumari, Nepal's Living Goddess. A throne-like white chair had been kept at the centre of the dais by the organisers flanked by nine former Kumaris, whose ages ranged from 90 to 19 and who were worshipped as goddesses. The chair, intended for the deposed king, remained empty after the restriction. The loyal organisers however continued with the programme in the name of "the king of five principalities, king of kings", the old address for the Shah kings and placed Gyanendra Shah and former queen Komal's photographs on the chair in protest. "We condemn the government's

action," they said. The home ministry said Gyanendra was asked to drop his plan due to security concerns. The Nepali Congress, the largest party in the ruling coalition, is holding its internal elections on Tuesday, the conclusion of its much-awaited 12th general convention. With a large number of security forces deployed at the election venue, the ministry said it would not be able to provide security to Gyanendra's entourage. "It's a lame excuse," the former king's aide said. "The government is apprehensive of the popularity of the king." Four years after Nepal became secular, the Kumari still remains a pivotal point for the republic and the former royals. An ancient king, Jay Prakash Malla, was said to have lost his kingdom after he displeased the Kumari, the guardian deity of the royal family. Traditionally, the kings of Nepal worshipped the Kumari during the Indraajatra festival, held this time of the year to celebrate a good harvest. Even after Nepal's parliament abolished monarchy in 2008, the deposed king had turned up at the temple of the Kumari to worship her as a commoner.

### **Paras in Muktinath**

Even as former king Gyanendra was prevented from attending a religious programme in Kathmandu, his son and former crown prince Paras flew to Mustang, a former Tibetan kingdom close to the Tibet border. The former playboy prince, who has begun attending temples with a vengeance, had gone on a private visit to the celebrated Muktinath temple, worshipped by Hindus, Buddhists and Jains alike, officials said

### **Political impasse continues in Nepal ahead of fresh poll**

With the Nepali Congress remaining adamant not to withdraw its candidate, Nepal appeared to be headed for a continued political impasse with tomorrow's eighth round of election unlikely to throw up a new Prime Minister. The two main political parties, Maoists and the ruling CPN-UML, have already announced boycotting tomorrow's poll, which means that even if all the remaining parties vote they will not be able to muster the magical figure of 301. Newly elected Nepali Congress general secretary Prakash Man Singh told PTI that his party will not withdraw its candidate during tomorrow's election for Prime Minister. The Nepali Congress was busy for a week during its 12th general convention that elected Sushil Koirala as president to succeed late Girija Prasad Koirala. Although the Maoists have announced that Prachanda would quit the race after reaching an agreement with the CPN-UML chairman Jhal Nath Khanal, Prachanda has not yet officially withdrawn the candidacy. The election process will continue tomorrow as we have already participated in the majority voting procedure, he said. Singh said that Nepali Congress will hold dialogue with other parties to resolve the present political stalemate once the party completes electing all of its central members. He asked the Maoists to create an atmosphere of trust by ending the politics of arms and sincerely implement the past agreements relating to the peace process. He called the Maoists to show its credibility by shunning violence, dismantling their paramilitary structure of Young Communists League, returning seized properties to their

rightful owners and completing the management of the arms and the combatants on the basis of consensus reached with other political parties.

### **'NTY 2011 to benefit from Tourism Day'**

The Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoTCA) along with Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) will celebrate 31st World Tourism Day on September 27 with the global theme, "Tourism and Biodiversity". For the celebration of 31st World Tourism Day, the ministry and the NTB are organising various functions on September 27. "For Nepal Tourism Year 2011, we are now focusing on international marketing," said Prachanda Man Shrestha, Chief Executive Officer of NTB. "Tourist arriving from the first flight will be welcomed and a procession from Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) to Thamel will be organised," said Shrestha. Welcome programme will be organised at Pokhara Airport and Lukla Airport. About 34 tourism organisations will participate in the celebrations, he said. Miss Nepal Sadikshya Shrestha, first runner-up Sahana Bajracharya and second runner-up Samyukta Timsina will also promote NTY 2011 at three different beauty contests that they are going to take part in Beijing, Shanghai and Vietnam respectively," he said, adding that Khagendra Thapa Magar, the shortest boy in the world, will also promote NTY 2011 as NTY 2011 goodwill ambassador.

### **Nepal government to ink deal with GMR despite Maoists**

Nepal's caretaker government is set to ink an agreement with Indian construction major GMR and its consortium for the 900 MW Upper Karnali hydropower project despite warnings by the former Maoist guerrillas that they would oppose it as well as 13 other projects, mostly involving Indian investors. The energy ministry is set to sign a project development agreement with the GMR-led consortium Sunday, said Anup Kumar Upadhyay, spokesperson at the Energy Ministry. 'We had planned to sign it Friday but it was delayed due to various reasons. If we can't wrap it up by Sunday evening, the understanding is that it will be done after the GMR representatives return from a China trip,' Upadhyay told IANS. In 2008, a consortium comprising GMR Energy Ltd, GMR Infrastructure and Italian-Thai Development Project successfully took part in an international bidding for the Upper Karnali project, then estimated to generate 300 MW. However, after winning the contract for feasibility study, the consortium proposed to the government that it could be upgraded to 900 MW. Nepal will receive 12 percent free energy as well as royalty from both the sale of the power generated and the generation capacity. Upadhyay said the agreement was delayed due to the time taken by the state authorities to issue an environmental clearance as well as the frequent general strikes called by political parties. After the agreement with GMR, Nepal will sign five more project development agreements in quick succession. Three of these are with Indian investors: the public sector Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam for the 402 MW Arun III; with Green Ventures, an Indian joint venture in Nepal founded by IIT alumnus K.R. Krishnan for Likhu 4 (120 MW); and Himtal Hydropower,

in which GMR has 80 percent stake, for the Upper Marsyangdi (600MW). Besides, agreements with seven more Indian companies, including Jindal Power Ltd, Maytas Estates and PES Energy, are in the pipeline. Upadhyay said the warning issued by the Maoists this week that all hydel projects above 100 MW would have to seek the approval of parliament or face obstruction had been dismissed by Energy Minister Prakash Sharan Mahat. Mahat trashed the allegation by the opposition party that the government was favouring Indian companies and awarding contracts to them to the detriment of national interests. According to him, the Indian companies bagged the projects after taking part in an international bidding process. He also said that in the coming days, the ministry was set to sign deals with a Norwegian and a Brazilian company as well, which gave the lie to the accusation. The minister also warned that the Maoist threat was alarming investors as well as financial institutions and could prove damaging for the economy of Nepal. The Maoist move has also been condemned by the Independent Power Producers' Association as well as the Chamber of Nepalese Industry. There are reports that the Maoists have been targeting GMR after the Indian company resisted extortion bids. The fresh threat to Indian companies comes as the former rebels are blaming New Delhi for the failure of their party to win the prime ministerial election even after seven rounds of vote.

<http://sify.com/news/nepal-government-to-ink-deal-with-gmr-despite-maoists-news-international-kjzpEdaeagf.html>

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### **Nepal's economic leeway getting less**

Nepal stood at 121st position securing 5.54 among the 141 economies in the Economic Freedom of the World Report. The report was released in Nepal by Samridhhi - The Prosperity Foundation - in conjunction with Society of Economic Journalists-Nepal (Sejon). The report paints a bleak picture of the state of economic freedom in Nepal over the last one decade as it constantly declined to 5.54 this year from 5.75 in 2000. The ranking of Nepal rank has improved a bit this year with a score of 5.54 thanks to the fall in score of other countries. However, the level of economic freedom in the country has gone down from last year's score of 5.68. Size of government, access to sound money, freedom to trade internationally and regulation of credit, labour, and business are said to be major reasons that have made Nepal as one of the least free countries in the world in terms of economic freedom. Five different areas like size of government, legal structure and security of property rights, access to sound money, freedom to trade internationally, and regulation of credit, labour, and business are the yardstick applied to determine the level of economic freedom. All the same, legal structure and security of property rights is the sole area in which Nepal has performed slightly better with its score increasing from 3.40 (112th) to 3.51 (111th). The annual peer-reviewed Economic Freedom of the world report is produced by the Fraser Institute - Canada's leading public policy think-tank - in cooperation with independent institutes in 80 nations and territories. The Report uses 42 different measures to create an index ranking countries around the world based on policies that encourage economic freedom.

## **Srilanka**

### **Sri Lanka opposition parties raise Fonseka's parliamentary privileges issue**

Colombo: Democratic National Alliance (DNA) parliamentarian Vijitha Herath and opposition and United National Party (UNP) leader Ranil Wickremasinghe had raised the issue of breaching former Army Commander and DNA MP Sarath Fonseka's parliamentary privileges in Sri Lanka's parliament today. Herath has told the legislature that DNA Leader Sarath Fonseka has not been allowed to attend the parliament sessions today for the second consecutive day. Opposition Leader has urged Speaker Chamal Rajapaksa to call for an explanation from the Army Commander Lieutenant General Jagath Jayasuriya regarding the matter. UNP legislator Dayasiri Jayasekara Thursday raised similar concerns over the Fonseka's privileges issue in parliament. Speaker Chamal Rajapaksa has said that he would look into the matter and take the required action. General (retd.) Fonseka is being kept in detention at the Navy Headquarters complex pending his application to the Court of Appeal against the verdict of the First Court Martial.

[http://www.colombopage.com/archive\\_10B/Sep24\\_1285334610JR.php](http://www.colombopage.com/archive_10B/Sep24_1285334610JR.php)

### **Sri Lanka court frees ex-army chief Fonseka's aides**

The magistrate's court of the Sri Lankan capital Colombo ordered the release of four aides of the former army chief Sarath Fonseka who was convicted of corruption and conspiring to topple the country's government. Two retired Major Generals, a Brigadier and a journalist were also charged with conspiracy to topple the government while associating with Fonseka. However, the court ordered their release Friday on advice of the attorney general who dropped charges against them, Xinhua reported. They had been arrested in February along with Fonseka but given bail in May. Fonseka is still under military custody and now faces a jail sentence after being convicted by two military courts. The former general who led Sri Lankan army in the successful battle against the LTTE rebels last year challenged President Mahinda Rajapaksa in this year's presidential election held in January. Rajapaksa defeated Fonseka but the former army chief won a seat in the legislature in the April parliamentary election.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/Sri-Lanka-court-frees-ex-army-chief-Fonseka-s-aides/Article1-604340.aspx>

### **Sri Lanka Opposition Leader publicly tears off the charge sheet against former Army Chief**

Sri Lanka Opposition Leader Ranil Wickremasinghe today publicly denounced the charges brought by the government against former Army Commander and current parliamentarian retired General Sarath Fonseka and tore off a mock charge sheet. He said that Fonseka was put in jail on the basis that he had not revealed his son-in-law's connection with Hicorp Company that was in the business of military supplies. He said the best could be done to the charge sheet was tearing it and tore a mock charge sheet publicly. The Opposition Leader performed this act of protest at the felicitation ceremony for veteran United National Party politician Amara Piyaseeli Ratnayake who is retiring from politics. Wickremasinghe pointed out the contradiction in granting amnesty to the murderers while putting Sarath Fonseka in jail. He questioned what action was taken against the persons who tied public servants to trees and who assaulted tax officers.

### **DNA calls on Sri Lanka religious leaders and public to come forward to protect ex-military chief's rights**

Sri Lanka's Democratic National Alliance (DNA) Sunday called on religious leaders and the public to come forward to protect the rights of former Army Commander and DNA Leader retired General Sarath Fonseka. Fonseka's wife, Anoma Fonseka told a press conference today that she did not expect justice for her husband from the President. She said that military officers have betrayed their uniforms to follow the orders of the country's highest authority. She claimed that officers sitting at the Courts Martial against Fonseka have betrayed their uniforms to safeguard their future as they would be harassed if they did not do so. Anoma said that Fonseka's detention after the Presidential Election and Courts Martial against him were in contravention to international norms. The first court martial against Fonseka stripped him of all medals, decorations and ranks while the second found him guilty of irregularities in army procurements and sentenced him to three years imprisonment pending approval by President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

### **Sri Lanka President meets UN Secretary-General**

Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa this morning met with the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in New York on the sidelines of the 65th session of the General Assembly. President Rajapaksa and the UN Chief are expected to discuss the progress of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission appointed by the President to investigate the events during the war and the progress of the resettlement of the internally displaced in the North and their rehabilitation among other matters. Sri Lanka's External Affairs Minister Prof. G. L. Peiris, Permanent Representative to the UN Dr. Palitha Kohona, parliamentarian Namal Rajapaksa, Secretary to the President Lalith Weerathunge also participated in the discussion with the UN Chief and his delegation. President Rajapaksa addressed the 65th session of the UN General Assembly yesterday and urged the attendees to reconsider the international humanitarian laws with regard to conflicts involving non-state actors such as the LTTE terrorist organization of Sri Lanka. "The asymmetrical nature of conflicts initiated by non-state actors gives rise to serious problems which need to be considered in earnest by the international community," the

President suggested. The UN chief appointed his own advisory panel to probe Sri Lanka's accountability with regard to alleged violations of international humanitarian laws and human rights by the government forces during the later stages of the war against the rebels. Sri Lanka vehemently opposed the appointment of the panel saying that it is unnecessary and unwarranted as the government has already set in motion a mechanism to probe the events took place during a seven-year period prior to the conclusion of the war. The three-member Panel of Experts led by Indonesia's former Attorney General Marzuki Darusman commenced its work officially on September 16. It has four months since commencing work to submit a report on its findings to the UN Secretary-General.

### **Sri Lanka's main opposition vows to take Fonseka's case before the Human Rights Committee for Parliamentarians**

Sri Lanka's main opposition United National Party (UNP) today said the party would take the initiative with other opposition parties in parliament to take the government injustices against former Army Commander and DNA Leader retired General Sarath Fonseka before the International Courts. UNP General Secretary Tissa Attanayake told a meeting in Seeduwa that Gampaha District UNP MP Dr. Jayalath Jayawardena would be assigned with the task of taking the necessary documents to be submitted to the International Courts. Dr. Jayawardena is expected to make representations before the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians of the Inter Parliamentary Union on October 2 in Geneva on behalf of Fonseka. Dr. Jayawardene has reportedly been invited to the hearing by Anders B. Johnson, the Union's Secretary General.

### **Local UNP government members of Sri Lanka extend their support to Premadasa**

The leadership hopeful of Sri Lanka's main opposition United National Party (UNP), Hambantota District MP Sajith Premadasa has received the support of local government members in several districts. UNP local government members and provincial councilors from the Kurunegala District yesterday (18) passed a resolution calling on UNP Leader Ranil Wickremasinghe to step down from the post of Leader and appoint Premadasa. The UNP local government members and councilors also passed a resolution calling for voting rights to be given to them when electing members to senior posts in the party. Opposition Leader of the Pannala Pradeshiya Sabha, Nilantha Herath told ColomboPage that the UNP members have also decided to give the party leadership a 15-day period to address the party crisis. "If the crisis is not resolved in 15 days, when the UNP parliamentarians decide to sit independently in the House, we would also sit independently in our respective local government bodies in the North Western Provincial Council. After the 15 days we will make our next move," Herath said. "The local government elections are to be held in three months and we are faced with many issues due to the current party crisis. UNP voters in the villagers have told us that if the current trend continues, they would not vote at the LG elections," he said. He noted that the UNP members who attended yesterday's meeting had blamed Wickremasinghe for the continuous electoral

defeats experienced by the party and blamed him for delaying the party reforms since 2004. Meanwhile, UNP local government members in the districts of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, and Galle today have passed resolutions that Premadasa be made the leader of the party.

### **Sri Lanka President criticizes laws that causes social injustice**

Colombo: Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa today said that large scale drug dealers made their businesses freely absconding the prevailing laws while drug addicts were punished with life imprisonment. Therefore, he pointed out the need for reform of laws that pave way to social injustice. The President made these observations at a ceremony held in the President's official residence Temple Trees to mark the passed Prison Inmates Day. Meeting 500 rehabilitated prison inmates and the prison officials at the Temple Trees, the President asked the prison inmates to be fruitful citizens for the motherland. "If a society is full of law abiding citizens there will be no need for prisons," he said adding that "skills of the prison inmates as well can be utilized for the national development process." The President further said that the severe congestion in prisons has also caused the increase of crimes. "Therefore, measures have been taken to ease the congestion in prisons," he said. The President presented awards to prisoners who has demonstrated special skills and awarded the Best Prison. Superintendent of Pallekale prison Tissa Jayasinghe was presented with the award for the Best Outdoor Prison. Mrs. Indrani Iriyagolla, Vice President of the Prisoners Welfare Association pinned the first prisoner welfare flag on the President and the Commissioner General of Prisons, Major general Vajira R. Silva presented a handicraft created by a prisoner to the President.

### **IMF approves US\$ 212.5 million fourth tranche of SBA to Sri Lanka**

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Friday completed the fourth review of Sri Lanka's economic performance under the Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) and approved an immediate disbursement of about US\$ 212.5 million. Under the US\$ 2.5 billion SBA approved by the IMF in July 24, 2009, the IMF has so far disbursed a total of about US\$ 1.27 billion to Sri Lanka. The Executive Board today also concluded the 2010 Article IV consultation with Sri Lanka, a press release issued by the IMF said. Following the Executive Board's discussion on Sri Lanka, Murilo Portugal, Deputy Managing Director and Acting Chair, has said that Sri Lanka's performance under the program has been satisfactory as overall economic conditions are improving and the economy is likely to show strong growth this year on the back of improved fundamentals and political stability. Sri Lanka recorded an economic growth rate of 8.5 percent in the second quarter of 2010, the highest ever recorded quarterly GDP growth since 2002. The Acting Chair has pointed out that "sustaining high, socially inclusive growth will require substantially higher levels of private investment, underpinned by broad-based structural and financial sector reforms." Portugal has said that the current favorable environment allows the authorities to focus on addressing the many challenges that remain, particularly in the fiscal and financial sectors. "Policies will be geared toward preserving macroeconomic stability, ensuring external competitiveness, facilitating capital market

development, and improving the investment climate," he has stated. The IMF official has highlighted that fundamental tax reform, including reform of the investment promotion regime, is central to achieving the government's budget deficit reduction targets while creating the fiscal space for reconstruction and infrastructure investment, as well as social spending. In this regard, the IMF says the 2011 budget will be the key to demonstrate the government's continued commitment to the program's goals. The IMF says further improvements in monetary policy formulation will provide useful support for macroeconomic stability and the country's Central Bank now in a position to move gradually toward a flexible framework to target the inflation more directly. The recent introduction of more exchange rate flexibility will support such a transition while also helping to maintain competitiveness, it says. "The government's financial sector reform agenda is on track. Further reforms include putting in place a deposit insurance system, establishing a regulatory framework for private sector pensions, and deepening capital markets, which will facilitate private investment," the Deputy Managing Director and Acting Chair has stated. Sri Lanka has seen a remarkable progress in the country's economy after the government wiped out the separatist Tamil Tiger rebel group, LTTE, in May 2009 and ended the three-decade long armed conflict.

[http://www.colombopage.com/archive\\_10B/Sep25\\_1285389387CH.php](http://www.colombopage.com/archive_10B/Sep25_1285389387CH.php)

### **Sri Lanka President calls for donor community to fulfill their obligations in assisting developing countries**

Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa today called for a genuine commitment to fulfill donor obligations to assist developing countries as the recent global economic and financial crisis has severely reduced the access to external resources and private capital flows for them. Addressing the Millennium Goals Debate at the United Nations today in New York, President Rajapaksa said unfortunately, the trend for more restrictions and protectionist measures in trade, debt relief, and access to technology is posing a challenge to development. It is important for development assistance from external sources to continue to encourage for the sake of sustainability, he said. Speaking of Sri Lanka, the President said Sri Lanka has already attained or is on track to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), initiated nine years ago, despite formidable odds, including the nearly three-decade long terrorist war and a devastating tsunami in December 2004. Sri Lanka was able to make such a progress in achieving the MDGs since the country has incorporated key performance indicators of MDGs in its national budget policies. President Rajapaksa noted that through the "Mahinda Chinthana - A vision for future", Sri Lanka embarked upon a 10 year pro-poor, and pro-development oriented framework, to further consolidate and accelerate socio-economic progress through the measures such as free healthcare and access to education that were already part of the country's overall policy since Independence.

The President spoke of the importance of a building a society that metes out quality treatment for women and children through a economic and social policy guided by the Buddhist tradition. He highlighted that Sri Lanka has achieved 99 percent in gender parity in primary education, and in secondary and tertiary education, the ratio of girls to boys exceeds one hundred percent. Now the challenge is to further enhance the quality of our education to empower and prepare young people for productive employment, he stressed. In the health sector, Sri Lanka has seen a drop in infant and under-five mortality rates from a rate of 32 per thousand births in 1990 to 11.3 per thousand in 2009. While focusing on countering tropical epidemics such as malaria and other vector borne diseases, Sri Lanka is now paying adequate attention to forms of non communicable diseases that pose a serious challenge, the President said. He urged the access to medicines at reasonable costs and more predictable financial and technical assistance to develop local capacities, to improve conditions for patients.

### **Sri Lanka President holds bilateral discussions with world leaders at the UN summit**

Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa who is attending the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly is to hold several bilateral discussions with other Heads of States. President Rajapaksa engaged in these bilateral discussions with leaders of friendly nations on the side lines of the special UN Summit on Millennium Development Goals convened by the UN Secretary General. The President met the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani in New York yesterday (20) and had discussions with him on the current developments in Sri Lanka. The Emir of Qatar has responded positively to a request by President Rajapaksa for Qatar to supply Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) to Sri Lanka for development needs, the government media unit said today. During the discussions the Emir has agreed to help in the development of Tourism in Sri Lanka, with increased visitors and investment in the industry and to assist in the further development of the Sri Lankan National Career, SriLankan Airlines. Both leaders reaching a close understanding on mutual cooperation between the two countries have agreed to improve the bilateral relations between them. Foreign Minister Prof. G. L. Peiris, Ministers Nimal Siripala de Silva and John Seneviratne, and parliamentarian Namal Rajapaksa also participated in the discussions with the Emir. President Rajapaksa also met the Chancellor of Germany, Ms. Angela Merkel at a reception hosted by her in New York yesterday. The President is expected to meet several other leaders today on the sidelines of the high level plenary meeting on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), commenced yesterday at the UN Headquarters. He is to apprise them of the post conflict development and peace situation in the country seeking support for the development projects. Sri Lanka has accorded highest priority to obtain Foreign Direct Investment to boost its economy in the country in addition to its all out efforts to promote economy by way of enhanced productivity in the fields of fishery, agriculture and the tourism sectors, the government has said

### **Lanka, China ties keep on improving**

Sri Lanka can achieve better economic development in the near future. Bilateral relations between our two countries keep on strengthening, said Chinese Ambassador in Sri Lanka Yang Xiuping addressing a gathering to commemorate the 61st National Day of the People's Republic of China at New Town Hall, Colombo yesterday. The 61st National Day will be celebrated by the Chinese people on October 1. Friendship between Sri Lanka and China has a long history and our diplomatic relationship started in 1957. At the moment Chinese companies are working in post war development programs in Sri Lanka. More training and scholarships will be provided to Sri Lankans, the Ambassador said. The secret of the success of the Chinese is punctuality. They work on the dot. "Sri Lanka has a great friend in China. China supported Sri Lanka in many ways during the war," Western Province Governor Alavi Mowlana said. China has become the second world power and will be super power within a few years, Petroleum Industries Minister Susil Premjayantha said. A token of appreciation was presented to the Minister by the Chinese People's Association for his contribution to the friendship between the two countries. The ceremony was organized by the Association for Sri Lanka-China Social and Cultural Co-operation, Listeners' Association of China Radio International and CRI Confucius Centre at Lumbini College.