

Hasina levels war crime charges against SQ Chy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday blasted the government for nominating Salauddin Quader Chowdhury to run for secretary general of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

She questioned the propriety of nominating a person with a dubious past and levelled allegations of serious crimes against him during the War of Liberation.

Hasina made the comments at Zia International Airport after the end of a month-long trip abroad. She went to Paris on May 15 to attend a conference Socialist Party and then went to the UK and US.

Talking to journalists at the airport, she questioned the aptitude of Chowdhury to become a suitable candidate for the OIC secretary general and said he might indulge in improper acts while in that post.

Referring to gold, drug and arms smuggling, Hasina alleged Chowdhury's linkage and expressed serious doubts about his present day business activities.

She made a specific allegation that Chowdhury was caught by Mujib Bahini in 1971 when he was trying to escape after the end of the War of Independence. She promised to unveil his past.

Announcement

Today's "Law and Our Rights" on page 6&7 focuses on freedom of press and defamation.



PHOTO: STAR

An empty vault meets police and bank officials after a guard of the Pubali Bank, Bangabandhu Avenue, decamped with Tk 27 lakh in cash and prize bonds during the weekend.

Bank cash gone with the guard

Tk 27 lakh vanishes from Pubali Bank vault

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A security guard of Pubali Bank at its Bangabandhu Avenue branch heisted about Tk 27 lakh in cash and prize bonds during the weekend.

Guard Abu Daud Sheikh decamped with the booty sometime between Thursday night and Friday night, leaving a note to the bank manager.

In the note he said, "By the time you receive this letter, I will be in India. I am not taking anything from the bank but leaving this note as the blame will fall on me."

He wrote that a group of 12 persons sneaked into the bank when he was in sleep and took away the money after beating him up.

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AL may join JS today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Main opposition Awami League (AL) may join the parliament session today.

"There is a possibility that we attend the session tomorrow to protest the anti-people budget," AL presidium member Suranjit Sengupta told The Daily Star last night.

The AL parliamentary party meets today at 5:00pm after which it may join the session, party insiders hinted.

The presidium is also to meet in a couple of days to chalk out the agitation programme against the proposed budget, AL sources said.

After a two-day adjournment,

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Booze duty to bubble up as Saifur budes

STAR REPORT

The government yesterday decided to withdraw the proposal to reduce duties on whisky, rum, gin, vodka, beer and other types of alcoholic drinks.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman took the decision at a meeting with the National Board of Revenue officials yesterday and made it known to journalists.

The finance minister in his budget speech Thursday proposed reduction of supplementary duty on beer to 150 per cent from 250 per cent and on liquors and hard drinks to 250 per

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Dengue looms as DCC's mosquito fight falls flat

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has deferred indefinitely its mosquito control drive because it is yet to procure the required larvicide and adulticide, sources at the Nagar Bhaban said.

For unknown reasons, the DCC has also stopped dengue surveillance. A proposal for resuming it has been lying with the mayor's office for about a year.

Absence of mosquito control drive and dengue surveillance might give rise to a dengue threat this year, sources pointed out.

Pools of fresh rainwater now provide numerous breeding grounds for aedes mosquito, which causes dengue fever. Although a cleanliness drive is now underway in the city, experts say it would not prove effective against aedes because it is bred inside or around houses.

Equipped with an Air Force Bell-212 helicopter with a spray machine at a cost of Tk one crore, the DCC now finds itself unable to go for aerial spray to combat mosquito menace. The ANVIL 10 + 10, an insecticide for the 'ultra low volume concentrated aerial spray', is not registered with the Plant Protection Wing (PPW). Moreover, the DCC is yet to finalise the 'mapping' with the Air Force for 'spraying strategy'.

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PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

A rickshaw wades through rainwater stagnated on the road near the Purana Palta yesterday. Much of the city reeled under water because of heavy rainfall and poor drainage.

Dhaka to seek trade boost with Jakarta

Sukarnoputri arrives Wednesday

NAZMUL AHSAN

Dhaka will stress bridging the trade gap with Jakarta during Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri's three-day visit that begins on Wednesday.

A treaty on avoidance of double taxation between the two nations is set to be signed during the visit, commerce ministry officials and business leaders said.

Presently, trade is heavily skewed for Indonesia.

Prior to Megawati's visit, a high-powered 10-member Indonesian business delegation arrives in Dhaka on a five-day visit on Monday.

The delegation, led by Dr Ing Hamy Elias, chairman of the Bangladesh Committee at Kadin, Indonesia, will meet the country's leading businessmen and investors.

They will visit a few manufacturing industries, especially in the ceramic and melamine sectors.

Indonesia has shown interest in reviewing the trade agreement between the two countries signed

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Writs on judges' confirmation stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court has stayed till tomorrow all proceedings of the High Court on the writs by additional judges challenging non-confirmation of their service despite recommendations by the chief justice.

On May 27, a three-member bench asked the government to produce all records including the recommendation of the chief justice. A hearing of the writs was scheduled for tomorrow before the bench headed by Justice Hamidul Haq.

Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division Syed JR Modassir Hossain

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US troops move to crush resistance in Iraq

AFP, Baghdad

US forces in Iraq pressed on Saturday with attempts to crush resistance to their occupation of the country, as a prominent Iraqi politician warned they could not expect to see attacks end unless they gave local people more power.

Fighting was concentrated in areas north of Baghdad, where many people still express sympathy for the regime of Saddam Hussein, which was ousted by US-led coalition forces in April.

US troops launched their operations from Sunday across north-central Iraq after taking a spate of casualties from armed groups in recent weeks, but Iraqi National Congress leader Ahmed Chalabi warned Washington that it is making a mistake by refusing to give Iraqis more authority over their own country.

Chalabi told the Washington Post in an interview published Saturday that the decision to limit Iraqi influence could spark increased opposition to the US-led occupation.

He criticised the White House decision not to grant immediate responsibilities to Iraqis or allow

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Bus crushes 2 to death in Uttara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two persons were crushed to death under the wheels of a passenger bus at sector 9 in Uttara yesterday.

The victims are Zahirul Kha, 30 and Mohammad Shipon, 25, both vegetable vendors.

They were on a pickup van heading for Tongi. The pickup van was parked by the roadside when the passenger bus hit it from behind at around 6:15am.

Both the traders fell off on the road and the bus ran over them. The two died on the spot. Police recovered the bodies and sent them to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy.

Later, the bodies were sent to their villages at Chhoto Foir and Boro Foir in Pubail, Gazipur.

Uttara Police seized both the vehicles but their drivers managed to escape.