

BNP trump card to be shown in next polls

PM warns opposition at Ctg rally

UNB, Ctg
Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday fired a salvo at the opposition for issuing so-called ultimatum and trump card to oust her elected government and declared that people would rather show them a BNP 'trump card' at the next elections, foiling all conspiracies.

"People will take a correct decision about elections in 2007 as they did in 2001 and give a fitting reply to the conspirators who want to turn Bangladesh into a satellite state and put people in shackles," she told a huge divisional grand rally of her party at Outer Stadium.

Khaleda, also the chairperson of the BNP, alleged that when the country is moving forward with a better economy and development work, conspiracies are being hatched at national and international level to cripple the economy, stop investment, destroy industry and education.

"A new conspiracy started through bombings to cripple econ-

omy and stop investment... We've made new laws, arrested and punished the terrors," she said, adding that though bomb terrorism started during the Awami League times, they could not take any step against the terrors.

The prime minister said the government arrested kingpins of militant outfit JMB and recovered explosive materials. "A lot of information is coming out from them -- much of it about the patrons of these bombers."

She said those who are patronising the bombers now guessed that "the cat will come out of the bag", and they started various conspiracies.

Khaleda said those who are perpetrating bomb blasts in the name of Islam are actually the enemies of Islam, peace, democracy, development, society and the country.

She claimed that the BNP became more popular than before and the opposition's conspiracy to isolate her party from the public fell

flat on its face.

Taking a swipe at the opposition movement, she said it has no respect for democracy and constitution and hence they are resorting to hartal, arson and destruction. Despite all their bids, people did not lend their support to them.

The prime minister urged the people to vote for the BNP to help it root out seeds of all conspiracies against the country.

Presided over by Whip Wahidul Alam MP, the rally was also addressed, among others, by BNP secretary general and LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Health Minister Dr Khandekar Mosharrar Hossain, Law Minister Barrister Maudud Ahmed, Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman, Agriculture Minister MK Anwar, Foreign Minister Morshed Khan, State Minister Selima Rahman, Advisor Barkatullah Bulu, State Minister Ziaul Huq Zia, state minister Ehsanul Huq Milan, LK Siddiqui and Mohammad Shajahan

Pak company to provide sophisticated driving licence

UNB, Dhaka

The government has decided to introduce high security driving licences for all kinds of vehicles within the next 15 weeks.

The decision has been taken to prevent the use of fake licences, curb road accidents and ensure safety on the highways.

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) will issue the new driving licences among the drivers.

A project contract was signed between BRTA and Pakistan National Database Registration Authority (PNDR) at the Ministry

PVT COLLEGE HC asks govt to pay arrears, 2 bonuses to teachers

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The High Court (HC) yesterday asked the government to immediately pay the due salaries and two Eid bonuses to 101 teachers and staff of 41 private colleges.

Earlier, the court had ordered the government to pay the due salaries to 308 private college teachers and staff.

After hearing writ petitions filed by 101 teachers and staff of 41 colleges, including Kesharhat Degree College, Rajshahi, a division bench of the High Court com

4 become national professors

BSS, Dhaka

The government yesterday appointed four educationists as national professors for five years as per Bangladesh National Professor Resolution (appointment, conditions and facilities) 1981.

They are Founder Secretary



Slum-dwellers rummage through the remains for household articles after a fire gutted the Rayerbazar slum yesterday.

Tk 24,000cr audit objections remain unsettled

Half of them against communications ministry, says first PAC report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Audit objections involving a staggering amount of Tk 24,000 crore remain unsettled and almost half of them came against the communications ministry, says the first report of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of current parliament.

The report says the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General raised a total of 799 audit objections against different ministries and divisions from 1972 to April 2004, but the PAC could discuss only 166 objections till April 2000.

The PAC, tasked with disposing

of audit objections, has realised only Tk 63.77 crore from 149 audit objections against 15 ministries and divisions.

"Besides, the committee has directed the authorities to realise Tk 12,581 crore against audit objections against different ministries and divisions," says the PAC report placed in the House yesterday by its Chairman Advocate Harun Al Rashid.

About the objections involving Tk 12,000 crore against the communications ministry, the secretary of the ministry claimed that the principal amount is only Tk 150

crore but it stood at Tk 12,000 crore with multiple interests since 1972.

The PAC report contains a set of recommendations aiming to bring transparency in the expenditures in ministries and divisions. In the report, the committee asked the ministries to refrain from spending money without prior allocation in budget.

The PAC, since its formation on May 12, 2003, held 37 meetings and is scheduled to hold 10 more meetings during the tenure of the current parliament. During the last parliament, the PAC held 1,043 meetings.

5 ministers nominated for Ekushey Padak

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Names of five ministers and fifteen others were referred to the prime minister last Wednesday for the selection of this year's Ekushey Padak nominees.

The names of the ministers have been proposed for their contribution in the field of education, sources said.

They are Health and Family Welfare Minister Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain, Education Minister Osman Faruq, Science, Information and Communications Technology Minister Abdul Moyeen Khan, State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharef Hossain Shahjahan, and State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Milan.

The names of freedom-fighter and renowned journalist late



A passenger gets out of a Mishuk (three-wheeler) that turned upside down on the slippery road at the Sonargaon intersection during cleaning of Saarc Fountain in the city yesterday.

IMF-WB for making hundi trade legal

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

A visiting IMF-World Bank team yesterday suggested legalising the hundi business to help increase the country's legal remittance inflow.

The five-member joint team comprising Maud Bokkerink, Marlene Manuel, Cheong-Ann Png and Maureen Sanders from the International Monetary Fund and Mark Butler from the World Bank (WB) came to Bangladesh on January 21.

Sources said following a series of talks in the last 11 days with quite a few organisations on prevention of money laundering, ending terror financing and boosting the remittance inflow, the team yesterday came up with the recommendation in a report submitted to the Bangladesh Bank (BB).

The volume of illegal remittance inflow is more or less equal to the amount of money that enters the country through legal channels, maintained the team. The government and the central bank have tried time and again through a wide range of measures to clog the illegal money transfer, but for little success.

Against this backdrop, the IMF-WB delegation prescribed

licensing the hundi traders to allow them run the business legally. It also mentioned that Pakistan, United Arab Emirate and the UK have done the same.

The team also suggested giving licences for transferring money directly to the private money-transfer agencies, like Western Union, that now transfer their clients' money into or out of the country through banking channels.

If it is done, the remitters will get more competitive currency exchange rates and the country's foreign exchange reserve will also be healthier, the team argued.

However, the BB pointed out that legalising the hundi trade would be contrary to the existing anti-money laundering law as well as the foreign exchange regulations.

Since its arrival, the team has discussed a wide range of issues including the proposed money laundering and terror financing prevention act and the financial intelligence unit with the central bank and made some recommendations on them. Sources said after getting the Bangladesh Bank's feedback, the IMF and the WB would decide their country assistance policy.

IAEA set to take Iran to Security Council

Russia, China promise to back resolution

AFP, Vienna

The UN nuclear watchdog met in emergency session yesterday, with Iranian allies Russia and China promising to back a resolution to take Tehran to the Security Council over its disputed nuclear activities.

"Russia and China have said they are going to vote for the resolution" on referral to the Security Council, a Western diplomat said.

The diplomat said that if Russia went back on its promise "it would cause a problem in bilateral relations with the United States."

A European diplomat said negotiations among the five permanent Security Council nations on a resolution for the UN watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had been "very constructive."

"No one tried to chip away for his own position," the diplomat said.

The IAEA's board of governors was meeting in emergency session, with no vote expected Thursday as the United States and Europe continue lobbying for wide support on the 35-nation body. A decision is expected Friday, a

diplomat close to the agency said.

Iran has threatened to retaliate if it is hauled before the Security Council by kick-starting sensitive fuel cycle work and blocking international inspections.

But the diplomat said that Iran's continued defiance of IAEA calls on it to stop nuclear fuel work that can also make bomb material has left "people not happy about taking Iran to the Security Council but seeing what the political reality is."

Russia and China made clear to IAEA non-aligned states at a meeting in Vienna Wednesday that they stood strongly behind the resolution, diplomats said.

They said the non-aligneds, which back Iran's right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, were surprised by the position of the two major Iranian allies and trade partners.

Russian ambassador Gregory Berdennikov told reporters: "We do not object to informing the Security Council of the United Nations about the work carried out by the agency in relation to Iran."

HC RULE Why govt won't be asked to set up judges' courts in 3 hill dists

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The High Court (HC) yesterday asked the government to show cause why it should not be directed to establish judges' courts and tribunals in the three districts of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

After hearing a writ petition filed by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), a division bench of the High Court passed the order issuing a rule, which is returnable in two weeks.

A total of 10 government offi

New internet worm set for attack today

NEWSFACTOR.COM

Security analysts are warning computer users about a new and potentially destructive Internet worm that can obliterate important documents. The worm, called Kama Sutra, is making the rounds now, but is scheduled to execute its first massive attack on February 3.

The malicious worm targets computers running Windows and

US forces battle Sadr militia in Baghdad

Four Iraqis, 5 GIs killed in attacks

AFP, AP, Baghdad

Four Iraqis were killed in a heavy gunfight and attacks that broke out before dawn yesterday reportedly between the Mehdi Army militia of radical Shia cleric Moqtada Sadr

and US forces in Baghdad's Sadr City while five American servicemen were killed in separate attacks.

Three US soldiers killed in a roadside bomb blast on Wednesday. The soldiers were on

Prayer Timing		
February 3		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-30	6-05
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-52	5-56
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation