



### Shazneen's eighth death anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the eighth death anniversary of Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, daughter of businessman Latifur Rahman.

A milad mahfil, seeking salvation of the departed soul of Shazneen, was held at the Gulshan

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## Iraqi lawmakers end political deadlock

Maliki asked to form new govt

AP, Baghdad

Iraq's president formally designated Shia politician Jawad al-Maliki to form a new government yesterday, starting a process aimed at healing ethnic and religious wounds and pulling the nation out of insurgency and sectarian strife.

The move ends months of political deadlock among Shias, Sunnis and Kurds that threatened to drag the nation into civil war. Al-Maliki has 30 days to present his Cabinet to parliament for approval.

Parliament elected President Jalal Talabani, a Kurd, to a second term and gave the post of parliament speaker to Mahmoud al-Mashhadani, a Sunni Arab. Al-

Mashhadani's two deputies were to be Khalid al-Attiyah, a Shia, and Aref Tayfour, a Kurd.

The tough-talking al-Maliki was nominated by the Shias on Friday after outgoing Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari gave up his bid for another term. Al-Jaafari's attempt to stay in office was adamantly opposed by Sunnis and Kurds, causing a months-long deadlock while the country's security crisis worsened in the wake of December's election.

US and Iraqi officials hope that a national unity government representing Shias, Sunnis and Kurds will be able to quell both the Sunni-led insurgency and bloody Shia-Sunni violence that has raged during the

political uncertainty. If it succeeds, it could enable the US to begin withdrawing its 133,000 troops.

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said the Bush administration is hopeful that the latest political developments in Iraq will lead to significant progress in forming a permanent government.

"We hope to see good progress in the coming days," McClellan told reporters traveling with President Bush to California. "We'll be watching."

Suspected insurgents, meanwhile, set off two bombs in a public market in central Iraq, killing at least two Iraqis and wounding 17.

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### Hasina urges people to join movement for reforms

UNB, Dhaka

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina has urged people to join the current anti-government movement to realise the opposition's demand for reforming the system of caretaker government and the Election Commission (EC) to ensure free, fair and credible elections.

"The government is adopting all machinations to steal votes in the coming election," she said when the newly elected office-bearers of Bangabandhu Textile Engineers Association called on her at AL's Dhanmondi office yesterday.

On the capture of JMB kingpins, Hasina said the government has arrested Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai in the face of international pressure but could not destroy the militant network.

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PHOTO: STAR

A human chain was formed in front of the Sangsad Bhaban yesterday demanding inclusion of a no-confidence option in ballot papers and an impartial caretaker government. Shushashoner Janno Nagorik (Sujan) organised the programme.

### 20 hurt as AL men clash with cops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Clashes between police and the Awami League (AL) activists left at least 20 people including 10 police personnel injured at Dhonbari of Madhupur upazila under the district yesterday when the AL was preparing to hold a rally defying Section 144.

As the AL leaders and activists led by AL central leader Abdul Latif Siddiqui, local MP Dr Abdur Razzak, and former state minister Nurul Islam entered Pankata High School premises at 3:30pm, police charged baton, sprayed rubber bullets and tear gas shells on them, leaving at least 10 injured.

AL activists also attacked the police and snatched four rifles from them.

Among the 10 injured policemen, Constable Habibur Rahman, 50, was rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.

Ten days earlier, Musuddi Union AL took permission from the authorities to hold a rally on

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### 2 DU students killed in city

DU CORRESPONDENT

A student of Dhaka University (DU) died falling from a tree on the campus while another student was killed when a train hit him at Khilkhet in the city yesterday.

Both the deceased were students of Sanskrit and Pali department and residents of A F Rahman Hall, hall sources said.

Alamgir Hossain Sony, 19, a first year student, fell down from a mango tree near the DU Central Mosque at about 1:30am. He along with some friends went out at night to collect mangoes, one of his friends said.

Sony was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he died yesterday morning.

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### US, India agree to share data on fighting terrorism

AFP, Washington

The United States and India have agreed to share information on a real time basis and hold joint exercises as part of counterterrorism efforts, the State Department said Friday.

The decision was made at a two-day meeting in Washington of the India-US joint working group on counterterrorism, the department said in a statement.

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Prayer Timing		
April 23		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-25	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-27	6-31
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation



PHOTO: STAR

Factory chimneys emitting exhausts cloud the skies over Old Dhaka as many industrial plants are located in this densely populated part of the capital.

## Hamas courting civil war, says Fatah

AFP, Gaza City

The Fatah party of Mahmud Abbas accused Hamas yesterday of courting civil war, as relations between the moderate Palestinian leader and the government hit crisis point less than a month after the radical Islamists took power.

Fatah accused Hamas supremo Khaled Meshaal of being hysterical for saying on Friday, in a thinly veiled reference to Abbas, that he was part of a plot to undermine Hamas and remove it from power.

"We view Khaled Meshaal's speech with concern," a statement said, referring to an address to an enthusiastic crowd of supporters in a Palestinian refugee camp in a Damascus suburb.

"We can only describe this speech as divisive, because it aims to provoke tensions in the Palestinian territories and spark civil war."

The war of words began when Abbas vetoed a Hamas government decision to create a new special force of armed militants headed by a wanted radical.

The move, the first time Abbas has revoked decisions of the new Hamas-led government, followed US criticism of the security appointment and Israeli threats to target the militant in question.

In response, Meshaal told his audience: "What is happening in Palestine is a policy carried out by a parallel government, a counter-government which deprives us of our prerogatives and the people of their rights. It is a plot."

"A certain part of our people is plotting against us. They are carrying out a premeditated plan which is aimed at our undoing."

In its harsh response, Fatah said the speech was by "a man whose ambition is and always has been to cause Palestinian blood to flow ...

while he lives in (Damascus exile) and benefits from the experiences of certain people to provoke divisions and civil wars."

It described Meshaal's remarks as "hysterical," and the speech as "full of plots, calumnies, lies and deception."

A member of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, an armed offshoot of Fatah that would theoretically participate in the Hamas-proposed security body, rejected Meshaal's comments and called for an apology.

"Khaled Meshaal should apologise and (prime minister) Ismail Haniya should explain himself, because he is a member of the Hamas politburo," he said at a press conference in Gaza City, without giving his name. "We reject these kinds of statements."

Only hours before the news of Abbas's decree, Haniya declared

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## BB mulls separate pay scale for staff

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh Bank (BB) is considering a separate pay scale for its staff, and the BB Board of Directors last week asked the central bank authorities to come up with a new pay structure.

A highly placed source said the bank authorities have already got green signal for this from the highest level of the government.

According to BB rules, salary of the staff will be determined by the bank's board of directors but it will have to be approved by the government.

After receiving the government's

go-ahead, the BB board at a meeting on Tuesday approved a proposal for a separate pay scale for the staff. The board meeting however recommended adjusting the proposed pay scale with a revised organogram, promotion policy and rationalisation of manpower.

The board noted that central banks in neighbouring countries like India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have separate pay scale for their staff. Their staff size however is small and quality-wise they are much more efficient than the BB staff.

Sources said the board felt that manpower in the central bank should be downsized. But instead of

going for cutting jobs now, the bank should first create an organogram, and the posts found unnecessary will be made defunct when those now holding the posts go on LPR (leave preparatory to retirement).

On promotion policy, the meeting stressed that a merit-based one should replace the existing practice.

The nature of BB's task has greatly changed, particularly following the introduction of floating exchange rates. The bank's concern has shifted to money laundering, monitoring of commercial

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### No talks without Jamaat, says Mujahid

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General and Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Muhammad Mujahid has said no dialogue on opposition's reform proposals will take place without participation of his party leaders.

"If Jamaat is left out from the dialogue, it will go for a tougher movement," said Mujahid while addressing a workers' conference of Jamaat at SS High School ground at Hatibandha upazila of Lalmonirhat district yesterday.

Chaired by Jamaat district Ameer Habibur Rahman, the conference was addressed, among others, by Lalmonirhat Jamaat Secretary Md Abdul Baten and Jamaat Central Working Council Member Golam Rabbani.

### JCD men push reporter off second floor of Jagannath Hall

DU CORRESPONDENT

Jatayatbadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) cadres severely beat up Minar Baidya, staff reporter of Dainik Ajker Kagoj, and pushed him off his room window on the second floor of Jagannath Hall in Dhaka University (DU) Friday night.

The victim Minar said the JCD attacked him because he sat in the front row of the dormitory's TV room on Wednesday night.

Minar, also a fourth year student of Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and later shifted to Trauma Centre.

Both his legs were fractured in the attack besides causing serious injury to his waist and some other parts of body.

Minar said a group of around 20 JCD cadres, student wing of the ruling BNP, loyal to hall unit JCD Secretary Sagar Majumdar, launched an attack on him around

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## ISPs lock horns with BTRC over licensing

MONJUR MAHMUD

The country's Internet service providers (ISPs) are at loggerheads with Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) over licensing for the allocation of submarine cable bandwidth.

Preparing for formal opening of the submarine cable late this month, BTRC, the telecom regulator, is also at the final stage of framing a submarine cable usage policy. The proposed policy has included a provision requiring subscribers to take a special licence for access to the information superhighway, said sources.

The ISPs currently pay Tk 4 lakh for the licence to provide Internet service nationwide and Tk 3 lakh to operate in the capital.

Once the usage policy takes effect, the procedure for bandwidth allocation will get costlier and even more complicated, argued the ISPs who are supposed to be the primary subscribers to the submarine cable service.

"There is every move to make things complicated and increase the dependency on bureaucracy while little is the preparation for building capacity necessary to ensure maximum utilisation of the

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### 2 killed in nor'westers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Two people died and ten others were injured as nor'wester lashed seven villages of Mollahat, Kachua and Chitalmari upazilas of Bagerhat district and Terokhedha upazila of Khulna district on Friday night.

The dead are Lacchu, 18, and Sumon, 4, of Patia village under Terokhedha upazila. Of the injured, four were admitted to Terokhedha Upazila Health Complex, while the remaining six were given first aid.

The storm started lashing the upazilas of the two districts at 9:30pm and lasted for 25 minutes. It also damaged about 200 tin-roofed houses, uprooted a large

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