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PM not trusting anyone with presidency

Says Hasina
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated her conviction that Prime Minister Khaleda Zia wants to become the president of the country to rig the upcoming parliamentary election scheduled for early next year.

"As the prime minister does not trust anyone in the post of the president, she is interested to become the president herself to steal votes in the upcoming election," Hasina, also president of Awami League (AL) said.

She was addressing a discussion, organised by her party marking its 57th founding anniversary on June 23, in the auditorium of Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh in the capital.

Hasina speculated that the prime minister will possibly

Fresh manpower export to Malaysia stalled

KL waits to see Dhaka 'approves' its investment proposals

RAFIQ HASAN

Kuala Lumpur may not allow fresh manpower from Dhaka soon unless the latter gives approval to some major investment proposals from Malaysian companies, highly placed sources in the government fear.

Kuala Lumpur recently committed to withdraw the previous ban on manpower import from Bangladesh after almost nine years. The withdrawal of ban was declared when Bangladesh's State Minister for Expatriate Welfare Mohammad Quamrul Islam visited Malaysia last month.

A high level delegation from Malaysia visited Dhaka this month

as a follow up for completing technical formalities for resuming fresh recruitment of workers.

According to sources, the visiting team led by the director general of immigration and comprising representatives from the ministry of home affairs, and labour and passport department of Malaysia already submitted its report to the authorities concerned in Malaysia. But Malaysia has yet to give a green signal for fresh recruitment of workers from Bangladesh, the sources said.

The Malaysian authorities however told Dhaka that fresh recruitment is being delayed due to unavailability of the Malaysian home minister in their capital. But

highly placed sources in the Bangladesh government said Kuala Lumpur is waiting for approval of some big investment proposals by Malaysian companies before opening the country for fresh workers from Dhaka.

According to sources proposals from Malaysia for investment of \$1.53 billion in Bangladesh are waiting for the Bangladesh government's approval. Proposals include construction of a 210 kilometre long expressway between Dhaka and Chittagong worth \$900 million, Akel customer service improving project worth \$250 million, and two power generation projects jointly worth \$410 million.

FM accuses diplomats of violating norm

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan yesterday criticised foreign diplomats severely for violating diplomatic norms and poking nose into Bangladesh's internal affairs of politics, election and system of government.

"This is beyond diplomatic niceties," he said adding, "there is internationally recognised diplomatic norms and practices, but sometimes we find breach of that and that's why we have reacted sternly."

Talking to the members of the Diplomatic Correspondents Association of Bangladesh (DCAB) at state guesthouse Padma over a lunch, Morshed reminded that diplomacy is not bilateral or tripartite bargaining and main functions of diplomats are to strengthen the relations and increase trade and economic cooperation among the countries.



Thousands of Hindu devotees take part in a traditional Rath Jatra (chariot procession) at Swamibagh in the capital yesterday.

Sultan-era mosque left in neglect

HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU, Bogra

The Darasbari Mosque of the Sultan Period in Shibganj upazila of Chapainawabganj district has been ruined due to lack of proper maintenance and supervision.

A senior official of the Archaeology Department said almost all the beauty of the terracotta edifice has been ruined as a good number of ornamental plaques on the mosque's walls have been misplaced and stolen.

Lack of maintenance has rendered the roof of the mosque collapsed while some walls have also partly damaged, he said.

More than 500 years old, the mosque in the Indo-Bangladesh bordering area was probably built in 1,470 during the period of Sultan Yusuf Shah, officials at the Archaeology Department said.

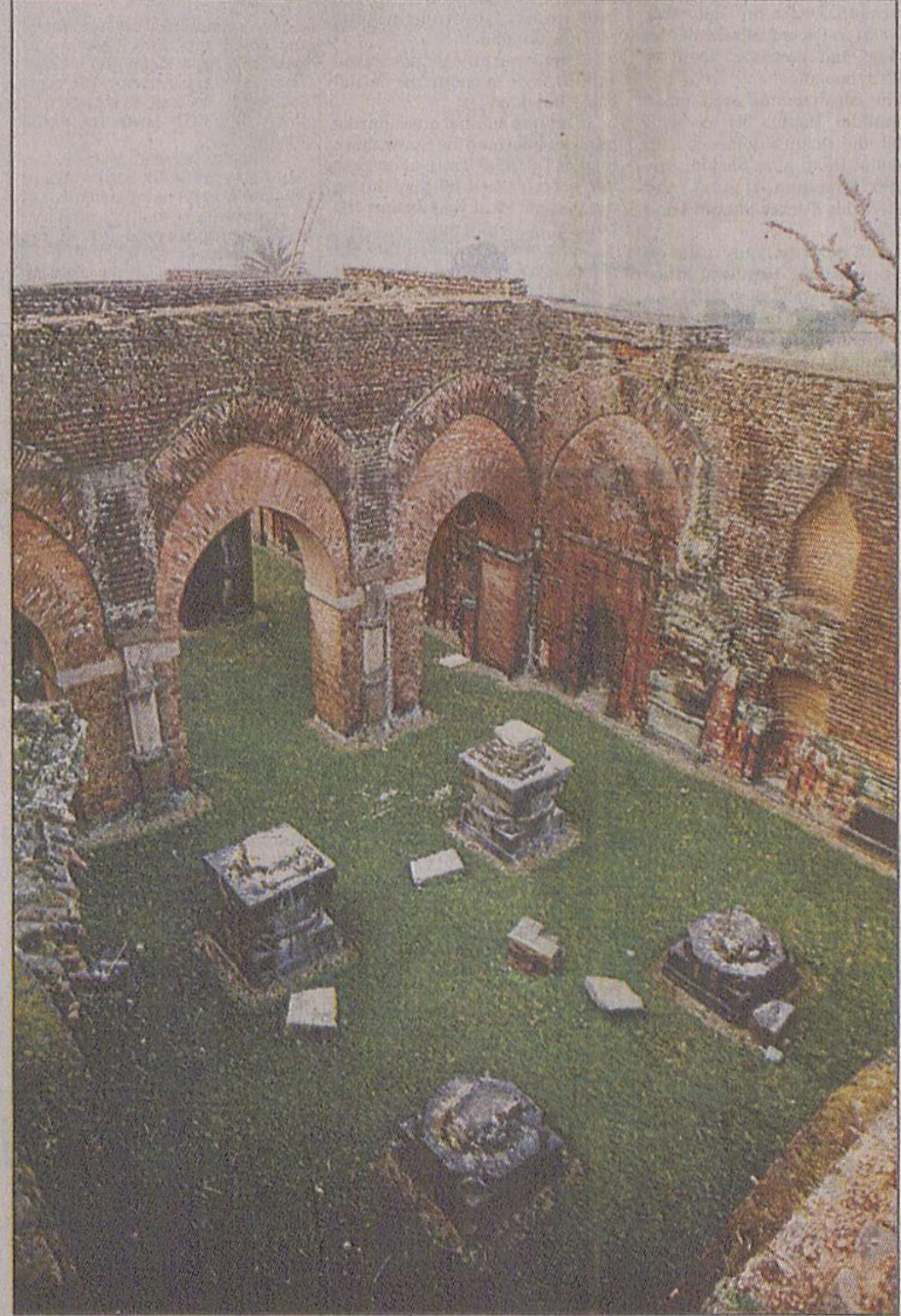
The mosque consisted of two oblong prayer halls, each measuring 100 feet in length and 39 feet in width with attached 10 feet verandah on the east. The walls are six feet thick.

The mosque has nine mihrabs depicting superb terracotta ornamentation with various floral and geometrical motifs in bold relief. The ornamentation bears great affinity to the decorations found in the Adina Mosque and Sidi Sayyid Mosque in Ahmedabad, India, also built around the same period.

Sources said the mosque probably had a "ladies gallery" in the northwest corner of an upper storey accessible through a flight of stairs from outside. Women of the surrounding areas probably used to participate in the religious and prayer congregations.

According to archaeology department officials, the terracotta work found at the site is the finest in artistry and design in the Bangladesh part of the Goud state.

Sources said a proposal was submitted by the Archaeology Department for the maintenance of the dilapidated mosque a few years ago but the government rejected it.



The Darasbari Mosque, a Sultan period edifice in Chapainawabganj, stands with collapsed roof due to lack of any maintenance or restoration initiative.

Court rejects Bulu's case against Abbas

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The case filed against Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas and the managing director (MD) of the private satellite television channel Boishakhi for threatening another director MNH Bulu with death was dismissed yesterday.

Metropolitan Magistrate AJM Abdullah Baqul passed the order following a report on the matter submitted by the investigation officer (IO) of the case. The court

Anwar may be asked to manage shipping too

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is yet to give the charge of the shipping ministry to anyone after the sudden death of Akbar Hossain on Sunday night.

Highly-placed sources in the government said a senior minister might be given the charge for running the ministry until the end of the government's tenure in October.

The sources indicated that Agriculture Minister MK Anwar could be the most probable choice

Mosaddek now IFIC chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mohammad Mosaddek Ali, a ruling party lawmaker, has been elected chairman of International Finance Investment and Commerce (IFIC) Bank Limited. He is the former political secretary to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

Lutfar Rahman, a member of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), was elected vice-chairman of the bank. He is also a director of National Television Ltd (Rtv).

New Hamas-Fatah plan recognises Israel

AP, Gaza City

The rival Hamas and Fatah movements agreed on a plan implicitly recognising Israel, a top Palestinian official said yesterday after weeks of acrimonious negotiations aiming to lift crippling international aid sanctions.

Moderate President Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah has been trying to coax his Hamas rivals into endorsing the document, which calls for a Palestinian state alongside Israel, in effect recognising the Jewish state. He has endorsed the plan as a way to end sanctions against the Hamas-led Palestinian government and pave the way to reopening peace talks with Israel.

"We have an agreement over the document," said Ibrahim Abu Najah, coordinator of the "national dialogue" over the proposal.

The plan also calls on militants to limit attacks to areas captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast War and calls for formation of a coalition Palestinian government.

The United States, Israel and European Union list Hamas as a terrorist group because it rejects the existence of Israel and has sent dozens of suicide bombers into the Jewish state, killing hundreds.

The West demands that Hamas recognize Israel, renounce violence and accept previous peace accords, but Hamas refuses. As a result, the West has cut off much-needed aid to the Palestinian government.

Salah Zeidan, another negotiator, said preparations were being made for a formal signing ceremony.

"All political groups are prepared for a mutual cease-fire with Israel," he said.

The document was formulated

Saifur tells JS of 'militant' accounts with Islami Bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman told parliament yesterday that some suspected militants' accounts with the Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited have been detected.

"An investigation is going on to unearth whether transactions under those accounts were made for militant activities," Saifur said replying to a query of lawmaker GM Quader of Jatiya Party (Ershad).

He said that all banks have been directed to report to the central bank immediately if any suspected transaction is identified.

Replying to Jamaat lawmaker Mia Golam Parwar, the finance minister told the House that till March 31 this year, there have been 1,779 defaulters with over Tk one crore loan each.

PROF YUNUS KILLING INVESTIGATION Focus back on Shibir as JMB men deny charge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) yesterday completed interrogating three militants of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) with two of them denying their involvement with the murder of Prof Yunus.

Abu Isa Enamul, a Rajshahi zonal commander and Golamur Rahman, a training commander and also an adherent of Asadullah Galib's Ahle Hadith Jubo Shanga (AHS), however, admitted that they came to know about the murder at their Baliaapukur den, hours after the incident.

The two also stuck to their statements at court.

Meanwhile, another Rajshahi zonal commander Shafiqullah alias Tarik and also the grandson of Galib, confessed to the killing. He also gave a judicial statement earlier.

"Tarik and his group came to our den and said, 'we attended the invitation'," Golamur said, explaining that the term 'attending invitation' means committing a murder.

The investigation officer (IO) of the case CID Inspector Nur Muhammad Sheikh said that Tarik identified the murder spot on Monday.

"Golamur and Abu Isa kept on denying when all of them were brought face to face," the IO said.

Tarik, however, told the investigators that arrestee Abu Isa Enamul was not the Enamul he mentioned.

The three were sent to jail following the completion of the three-day remand.

"The previous police findings indicating Shibir involvement seem accurate as confessions of the accused do not corroborate the reality and others' assertions," said a source, quoting the investigators.

TARIK'S STATEMENT

In a judicial statement at a Juyevpur court on April 13 over the Gazipur blasts on November 29, 2005, Tarik told that he led a group of 10 to kill Prof Yunus on orders of JMB Chief Ataur Rahman.

3 killed in Rab 'shootouts'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two underground operatives and a fugitive criminal were killed during "shootouts" between their cohorts and the members of Rapid Action Battalion in Barisal, Barguna and Kusthia districts early yesterday.

They are Monirul Islam alias Nabir Howladar, 40, second-in-command of Habul Bahini of Sarbahara Party (Zia group) in Barisal, Ziauddin Sohel, 35, an accused in 13 criminal cases in Barguna, and Mohsin Ali alias Mohon, 37, a regional leader of Biplobi Communist Party (BPC) in Kusthia.

According to our Barisal correspondent, Rab-8 members arrested Monirul at Hotel Prince in Port Road area of the city Monday afternoon and took him to their camp for quizzing.

On his confessional statement, the Rab men along with Monirul set

CARJACKING CASE Paban's bail prayer rejected

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday again rejected the bail petition of Aktar Hamid Paban, son of Chief Whip Khandakar Delwar Hossain, arrested on charge of carjacking.

Metropolitan Magistrate Nani Gopal Biswas passed the order following the hearing.

On June 19, the same court rejected Paban's bail petition saying that the charges brought against him were primarily proved.

Prayer Timing

June 28

Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-54	6-57
Esha	8-17	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Bike bomb kills 22 Iraqis watching World Cup football

AFP, Baquba

Twenty-two Iraqis, including children, were killed when a motorbike bomb exploded in a market square where villagers were watching a World Cup football match Monday, according to a new toll Tuesday.

The booby-trapped motorcycle exploded in the midst of a crowd of youngsters packed into the square in the Shiite village of Khairnabat near Baquba, some 70 kilometres (44 miles) north-east of Baghdad to watch the Italy-Australia clash.

"Many young men and children were among the dead," a security source said. About 40 people were also injured in the blast.

The source said tensions were running high in impoverished Khairnabat, with villagers brandishing weapons fearing further attacks by rebels during the funeral for the victims.

The Baquba area, with its explosive mix of Sunnis and Shiites, is one of the main fronts in the sectarian violence ravaging Iraq.

At almost the same time as the Khairnabat attack, a home-made bomb exploded in the main market in Hilla, 100 kilometres (60 miles) south of Baghdad, killing 10 people and wounding at least 79, according to the latest toll provided by the hospital Tuesday.

The attacks came one day after Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki unveiled a national reconciliation plan aimed at stemming the bloodshed.



One of the five sweet-water crocodiles brought from Chennai and released in the pond at Khan Jahan Ali shrine in Bagerhat last year.