

# North Korea fires volley of missiles

AFP, Seoul  
North Korea test-fired seven missiles yesterday, including a long-range Taepodong-2 capable of reaching US soil, sparking condemnation from Washington and neighboring Japan and South Korea.

US officials said Pyongyang launched five short- or medium-range missiles, which splashed down in the Sea of Japan (East Sea), as well as a Taepodong-2 that apparently failed less than a minute after liftoff.

The missile launches by the Stalinist state triggered a flurry of diplomatic initiatives, headlined by a meeting of the United Nations Security Council to be convened later Wednesday.

Washington described the tests as "provocative behaviour" and said it was dispatching a senior official to the region shortly after the firings,

which coincided with the US Independence Day holiday and a US space shuttle launch.

South Korea, which has a policy of engagement with its reclusive neighbour, condemned the missile launches, saying they had threatened regional stability, and urged Pyongyang to return to six-party nuclear disarmament talks.

"North Korea should be held responsible for all the consequences," said Suh Choo-Suk, South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun's security policy advisor.

"We express our strong regret at their ill-conceived act," he said, adding South Korea would consult with its allies on how to handle the situation.

Japan denounced the launches as a "grave problem", put its troops on a higher state of alert and said it was considering economic sanctions against North Korea.

Japanese vessels were dispatched to the Sea of Japan (East Sea) to try to retrieve the fallen missiles for analysis, Defense Agency head Fukushima Nukaga said.

Japan is particularly sensitive to missile tests by North Korea, which in 1998 fired a Taepodong-1 missile over Japan into the Pacific, prompting Tokyo and Washington to step up cooperation to build missile defenses.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe said Pyongyang had defied the international community with the launch of the missiles, which landed several hundred kilometers (miles) from the coast of Japan.

"Today's launches were done despite advance warning by the relevant countries," said Abe, the government's top spokesman.

"This is a grave problem in

## UN mulls response to N Korean missiles

AFP, United Nations  
The UN Security Council kicked off emergency consultations on North Korea's missile launches yesterday, amid a flurry of US-led diplomacy to respond to what Washington and the European Union termed Pyongyang's "provocative" acts.

The closed-door meeting was called by Tokyo after Pyongyang test-fired seven missiles Wednesday, including a long-range Taepodong-2 capable of reaching US soil, sparking outrage from neighboring Japan and the United States.

The Pentagon confirmed that North Korea launched another missile, bringing to seven the number of missiles fired by the Stalinist state over a 24-hour period.

Speaking to reporters on his way to the council meeting, US Ambassador John Bolton said: "We hope we have a strong and unanimous signal from the council that



Latifur Rahman, 2nd from left, accompanied by lawyers, comes out of the High Court that yesterday started delivery of judgement in the case of the murder of his daughter Shazneen.

## VOTER LIST Moudud favours door-to-door visits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
The Election Commission (EC) should encourage the voters to be enlisted without any delay and also needs to visit door to door to collect information, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed said yesterday.

He was addressing a discussion titled 'Face to Face with Women Journalists' organised by the Bangladesh Centre for Development, Journalism and Communication (BCDJC) at its

## Bashundhara director murdered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
Body of a Bashundhara Telecommunication Limited director, Humayun Kabir Sabir, 30, was found stuck over the boundary fence of an apartment building at Road 104, Gulshan in the capital yesterday morning.

Humayun's family sources said he left his house on Tuesday night at around 11:30pm for one of Bashundhara's offices at Road 104, Gulshan and was missing since then.

Gulshan police said the security guards and a caretaker of the building found Humayun's body and notified a Bashundhara official Samsuddin Ahmed, who identified the body.

Humayun's brother-in-law AFM Asif alleged that Humayun might have been murdered.

No case was filed in this connection until 7:00pm last evening.

## Proceedings of defamation suit against editor by Abbas stayed

UNB, Dhaka  
The High Court (HC) yesterday stayed the proceedings of a defamation suit filed by Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas against the editor and the publisher of Prothom Alo, a leading vernacular daily.

Passing the order, a division bench comprising Justice SK Sinha and Justice AB Mahmudul Huq issued a rule upon the government and complainant Mirza Abbas to explain why the libel suit should not be quashed.

The court order came following



Illegally constructed just beside the Buriganga River, this building blocks the construction of a riverbank road by Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority.

## 13 hurt as gas cylinder explodes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg  
At least 13 people were injured yesterday when a gas cylinder exploded and set a motor workshop afire at Nimitala under the city's Bandar Police Station.

Seven of the injured were admitted to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

One of the injured, Mohammad Ershad, 20, is in critical condition. The rest were identified as Monzur Alam, 30, Enam Hossain, 21, Jalal Uddin, 22, Shahanur Alam, 25, Mohammad Asif, 18, and Badsha Mia, 18.

Sources said the incident occurred at around 10.30am yesterday at Ayesha Motor Workshop, owned by one Iskander. Around 25 to 30 workers were at work at that time.

Gas cylinder in a CNG-run car went off and injured the 13 workers when some of them were working on the car.

The car and another vehicle caught fire from the explosion and were burned down completely. The workshop was heavily damaged in the fire as well.

It took almost an hour for the fire fighters to extinguish the blaze.

## Grafts reported in media cost country Tk 526cr last year

TIB corruption database reveals  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
The government suffered a loss of Tk 526.27 crore in 2,128 corruption incidents that were reported in the newspapers in 2005, corruption database 2005 published by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) says.

Due to corruption in the local government and rural development sector alone, Tk 208.9 crore went down the drain, says the TIB database presented at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Unbounded and unchallenged power, lack of transparency and weak administrations were the main reasons for spreading corruption in the society, the report observed.

Among 47 sectors that came under the TIB's scrutiny, education, police, health and family planning, local government and rural development and private sector were the

top five corrupt sectors while the secondary education department has the highest incidence of bribery.

Police forcibly take money through abuse of power at the police stations and traffic department, the report says, adding that medical college hospitals and health complexes are the most corrupt in the health department.

"We have been observing that the trend of corruption in the country is going up," Chairman of TIB Trustee Board Prof Mozaffar Ahmed said, disclosing the database prepared on the basis of reports published in 26 leading dailies of the country during the year.

He, however, said the grand corruption in the society is yet to be identified, which is one of the weaknesses of the TIB report.

He said if the corruption reduces in the society, it would increase the self-reliance.

## 50 hurt in clash over road construction

UNB, Sherpur  
At least 50 people, including three cops, were injured in a clash between the inhabitants of two villages over construction of a road in Sadar upazila yesterday.

Police and locals said the clash erupted when the people of Dakpara swooped on the people of

## Colombo preparing for war, Tigers say

AFP, Kilinochchi  
LTTE's political wing leader, S.P. Thamilselvan said that it was the Sri Lankan government which was escalating violence.

"The government invariably seems to be adamant in not fulfilling its obligations and letting (the ceasefire) rot, and then going to a military solution," Thamilselvan said in an interview with AFP here earlier this week.

The Tigers maintain their own police, courts and a civil administration here but civil servants continue to be paid by the Sri Lankan government for delivering services to the Tamil minority living in rebel-held territory.

Since the new Colombo government of President Mahinda Rajapakse came to power in November, the Tigers have been

## Opposition sure to take part in polls

Hasina tells US journalists  
UNB, Dhaka  
Sheikh Hasina, the opposition leader, has said they will certainly take part in the upcoming general elections, as the people through a mass movement will compel the government to hold the elections in a free and fair manner.

"Bangladesh is a secular country. A vested quarter is trying to change it into an Islamic country. But they will not succeed," Hasina was quoted as telling a delegation of US journalists at her Sudha Sadan residence yesterday.

Briefing newsmen, Awami League (AL) Advisory Council Member AMA Muhith said they discussed various issues, including

present political situation, religious freedom, upcoming election, poverty eradication and regional issues.

Hasina told the delegation that the opposition stands for a free and fair general election. "Whenever state power was grabbed through any machination, people took to the street and ousted the undemocratic forces through mass movement," she said.

AL leaders AMA Muhith, Asaduzzaman Noor MP and Syed Abul Hossain MP were present.

Convenor of the delegation Scots Richard Baker told local journalists that their meeting with the opposition leader was fruitful and effective.

Prayer Timing		
July 6		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-10	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-55	7-00
Esha	8-17	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

