

TIE WITH ERSHAD
Hasina questions uncompromising image of Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the prime minister who is known as an uncompromising leader within her party (BNP) is now compromising with 'her husband's killer' ousted autocratic president HM Ershad.

"Reminding one of a Shakespearean tragedy, Khaleda Zia (PM) once accused Jatiya Party Chairman Ershad as the killer of her husband (president) Ziaur Rahman but is now compromising with him to forge an electoral alliance," said Hasina, also president of the main opposition Awami League (AL).

The AL chief was speaking at a closed-door exchange of views with her party's grassroots level leaders from Meherpur, Chuadanga and Narail districts at her Dhanmondi office in the city.

Hasina mentioned that in 1990, Khaleda Zia publicly called Ershad the killer of her husband.

"Formation of an alliance with Ershad is not a new thing," she said. "It is a natural process. We have seen it many times before."

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ADB REPORT Energy subsidy, political uncertainty, power crisis main challenges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has identified a huge subsidy on energy products, unrest in garment industry, power crisis and political instability as major challenges facing the country.

The ADB yesterday released Bangladesh Quarterly Economic Update that suggested the government to withdraw all kinds of energy subsidy gradually to allow the national economy and individual consumers to adapt to higher energy prices.

Success in the garment sector can be reversed if social compliance issues, including labour unrest, are not addressed, says the ADB report

released at a press conference at its office in the capital.

"Recurrence of labour unrest will be damaging not only to the garment industry but to the entire economy...The labour unrest needs to be resolved dispassionately in the best interest of the three parties: workers, employers and the government," the report says.

ADB Country Director Hua Du and its economist Rezaul Karim Khan were present at the press conference.

About a huge subsidy on energy products, Hua Du said the government should reallocate the money to sectors like health and education so that poor people can get subsidised services.

"You (Bangladesh) need to

basically prioritise in allocating scarce resources," she said, adding that mostly the rich people use subsidised energy products.

"Subsidy on diesel and octane means that well off segment of the society is getting the subsidised products. But the government should focus the subsidy for the less well off people and thus it should allocate more money for health and education," Hua Du said.

She observed that a huge subsidy on energy products has inflationary pressure and at the same time it is creating pressure in the money market when government

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RMG workers demonstrate for minimum wages

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least a dozen garments factories on Rokeya Sarani stopped production as hundreds of their workers came out to the street demanding a minimum wage of Tk 3,000 a month and other facilities.

Traffic movement on the busy road stopped for about two hours from 11:30am as the workers marched the street from Shewrapara to Mirpur-10 roundabout and chanted slogans.

Some agitated garment workers damaged the shutter of a shop selling construction materials at Shewrapara following a rumour

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PHOTO: STAR

Garment factory workers bring out a procession on Rokeya Sarani at Sheorapara in Mirpur in the capital yesterday demanding an increase in their minimum wages and other facilities.

Striking teachers to barricade roads today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Front of Teachers and Employees (NFTE), who are on indefinite strike, will barricade roads and waterways in all districts today to force the government meet their demands.

NFTE's blockade will however exclude the capital. Their demands include cent per cent basic salary from the government exchequer and elimination of discrimination in providing other facilities.

The NFTE, a platform of 11 teachers' and employees' organisations, will blockade road and waterways from 11:00am to noon. NFTE will also organise representatives' meetings at educational institutions from tomorrow to

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SC bar denied appointment with president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Bangabhaban official yesterday informed the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) that their appointment with President Iajuddin Ahmed is not possible now as the president has not completely recovered from illness.

The SCBA in its July 27 letter to the president sought his meeting with a civil society delegation to discuss people's concern about their voting rights and empowerment.

The letter was sent as part of a follow up action of a July 22 roundtable organised by SCBA where a large number of professionals, lawyers and civil society leaders requested the president to remove the Chief Election Commissioner and two election commissioners if they do not willingly resign by July 31.

An official from the president's office said the president is still recovering from illness.

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Prayer Timing		
August 1		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-20	4-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-47	6-50
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

14-party convention this month to set strategy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL)-led 14-party opposition combine yesterday decided to hold a national convention in the capital this month to give strategic directives to the district and upazila leaders.

The convention would inform the leaders about the latest political situation and give them directives to further strengthen the opposition in different districts and upazilas.

"We have decided to hold the convention to inform them about the

latest political scenario, to convey political decisions to our grassroots leaders and to strengthen the opposition combine's activities where we are yet to have an organisational shape," a senior leader told the Daily Star after a meeting of the opposition combine.

The meeting was held at 14-party coordinator Abdul Jalil's Nam flat with AL Presidium Member Abdur Razzak in the chair.

The meeting also decided to organise road marches at different district headquarters after August

15 and a grand rally in the capital on the first week of September. The opposition combine will sit again today at 3:00pm to formally announce their next course of action to compel the government accept the electoral reforms.

Leaders in the meeting also observed that they would consider sitting for dialogues with the coalition government if the alliance government proposed an alterna

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UN asks Iran to halt nuke work by Aug 31

AFP, United Nations

The UN Security Council yesterday passed a resolution ordering Iran to halt its controversial nuclear work by August 31 or face possible sanctions.

Resolution 1696 expresses "serious concern" at Iran's refusal to comply with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) orders to halt uranium enrichment and other nuclear work.

The measure was passed by 14 votes to one with Qatar alone on the 15-member council opposing the resolution.

The resolution was proposed by

Britain, France and Germany, with strong US backing. All suspect that Iran's nuclear programme hides covert efforts to build a nuclear bomb. Iran says its research is for peaceful purposes.

The United States' UN ambassador John Bolton told the council that Iran has "consistently and brazenly defied the international community by continuing its pursuit of nuclear weapons".

He said a "firm response" was needed because of the threat to international peace and security represented by the Iranian programme.

If Iran does not suspend its nuclear work by August 31, the Security Council will then consider a new resolution that could order economic and political sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

Bolton has said the United States will move "forcefully" to press for sanctions if Iran rejects.

Before the resolution was passed, Iran had threatened to reject an international offer of political and economic incentives to persuade it to suspend its nuclear research.



PHOTO: STAR

A mobile court confiscates 15 date-expired life saving drugs at the pharmacy of Central Hospital on Green Road in the capital.

Typhoid spreads evoking fear of bad water system

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Along with dengue and viral fever, typhoid is spreading fast in different parts of the capital while the city's government and private hospitals are witnessing an increase of typhoid-affected patients.

Physicians suspect the water supplied by the Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) has been contaminated and this might be a key cause behind the spread of the intestinal disease.

Sometimes dirty sewer water leaks into water pipelines that leads to an outbreak of typhoid, they said.

Officials of the Microbiology department of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) said 60 of the 436 diagnosed patients at DMCH were reported to be typhoid patients.

The department that conducted a survey from June 15 to July 25 saw an increase of patients during the time.

A survey by the Microbiology department of Dhaka Shishu Hospital identified 110 typhoid patients until July 27.

Children are more vulnerable to typhoid, as they are usually fond of roadside unhygienic and stale foods

that contain typhoid bacteria. Following high fever and severe headache, five-year-old Sumaiya Ashfaq of Kalyanpur was admitted to Dhaka Shishu Hospital two weeks ago.

"As her fever kept on increasing, we got her blood tested and found her suffering from typhoid," said Sumaiya's mother.

Typhoid is no longer a precarious disease as there are advanced medical procedures, Head of the

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Bashar blow for Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar has been ruled out of the rest of the African tour that included three one-dayers against Zimbabwe and as many in Kenya due to a hand injury.

With Bashar out of action for at least a month, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday announced wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud as captain for the rest of the tour.

The 33-year-old hurt his left hand while trying to take a catch at first slip during the second ODI in Harare on Sunday. The skipper came off the field after suffering the injury and Mashud captained the side in his absence, which Bangladesh won by 62 runs.

An X-ray on Monday morning done by Dr. Coric, an Yugoslav orthopaedic surgeon, confirmed a fracture on Bashar's left hand.

"He (Bashar) has a small fracture on his left fifth metacarpal and the injury would need four to six weeks to heal," said team physio Paul Close to BCB's official website

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2 outlaws found dead in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Two cadres of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-Janajuddho) were found dead here yesterday.

They are Sumon, 23, and Shahidul, 30. On information, police recovered Sumon's body from Labouchora under Khulna Police Station and Shahidul's body from Rupsha bypass under Daulatpur Police Station in the morning.

According to a source in an intelligence agency, Sumon and Shahidul were members of the PBCP bomb squad and assigned to implement a killing mission in Khulna city.

Police said the outlaws were killed as a sequel to intra-party rivalry. Sumon hailed from Natunbazar area under Khulna Police Station while Shahidul from Jessore town.

Meanwhile, security has been tightened at all important installations in Khulna city and its adjoining areas, fearing subversive activities by both extremists and Islamic militants.

44 killed in fierce Lankan fighting

Tigers accuse Colombo of declaring war

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan troops and Tiger rebels were locked yesterday in the bloodiest ground battle since their 2002 truce went into effect with at least 44 combatants killed, the military said.

The rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) accused the government of virtually declaring war on them with the latest offensive

and vowed to resist a military advance to open a water canal blocked by the guerrillas 10 days ago in an area under their control.

The defence ministry said it had lost at least nine soldiers killed and six wounded, but managed to take control of the sluice gates by Monday afternoon after heavy

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3 pvt hospitals fined for using date-expired medicines

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three private hospitals were fined Tk 50,000 by a mobile court in the city yesterday for using expired medicines and reagents and for not maintaining hygiene in pathological laboratories.

The court led by First Class Metropolitan Magistrate Narayan Chandra Debnath carried out raids at Bangladesh Medical College Hospital, Central Hospital and Lab Aid Cardiac Hospital yesterday morning.

Officials of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and 12 mem

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HC RULE ON ACC Why appointment of inspectors not illegal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) issued a rule yesterday on the Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) to explain why the appointment of 52 inspectors as the deputy assistant director should not be declared illegal.

A division bench of the HC issued the rule following a writ petition filed by four inspectors of the now defunct Bureau of Anti Corruption (Bac), including one Luffar Rahman, challenging the

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PHOTO: STAR

A man clears splinters of shattered windshield of Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University vice-chancellor's car at Agargaon in the capital yesterday after students went on a rampage protesting assault on a teacher by a JCD leader.