

Shun anti-export agitation

CA urges political parties, opens Dhaka trade fair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President and Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday urged the political parties to refrain from declaring any programmes that can hamper the country's export activities.

"Stable business environment is necessary in every stage of establishing new industry, attracting foreign investment and boosting production," he said.

"None should declare any programmes that impede export activities and make the country lose in the international market," the president said addressing the

inaugural ceremony of the Dhaka International Trade Fair (DITF), 2006 held at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

Earlier, Iajuddin inaugurated the month-long trade fair, jointly organised by the Ministry of Commerce and the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

Dr Akbar Ali Khan, adviser to the ministries of finance and planning, commerce and post and telecommunication, Feroz Ahmed, secretary of commerce ministry, Mir Shahabuddin Mohammad, vice-chairman of the EPB and Mir Nasir Hossain, president of the Federation of Bangladesh

Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) also spoke at the inaugural ceremony.

"Despite having huge competitions and barriers in the global market, we have achieved a 21.63 percent export growth during the last fiscal year," the CA said adding that along with finding new markets for the Bangladeshi products, this performance has to be retained too.

"We have to step forward along with the global business trend as it is becoming faster through the e-commerce, we have no reason to

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5 envoys meet Jalil, discuss current impasse

UNB, Dhaka

Envoys of USA, UK, Canada, Australia and Japan met Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jalil at his Gulshan residence yesterday and discussed the current impasse over the general elections.

US Ambassador Patricia Butenis, UK High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury, Canadian High Commissioner Barbara Richardson, Australian High Commissioner Douglas Foskett and Japanese Ambassador Masayuki Inoue were present in the meeting that lasted for about 45 minutes.

Awami League presidium member Kazi Zafrullah and Barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud, vice-president of Bangladesh Bar Council, were also present.

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Ambassadors and high commissioners of the US, UK, Australia, Canada and Japan to Bangladesh meet Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil at his residence yesterday.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA



Zimbabwean cricketer Sean Williams delivers a ball during a practice session as security men inspect the ground with metal detectors at Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

ONE-DAY CRICKET Tigers face Zim in Bogra today

BISHWAJIT ROY, from Bogra

Bangladesh vow not to show any mercy in their attempt to regain the series when they take on Zimbabwe in the second one-day international of the five-game battle at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium here today.

The day-night match starts at 1:30pm with Bangladesh Television (BTV) and Channel i beaming live coverage from the northern district town where the third one-day will also take place on Tuesday, also under lights.

Habibul Bashar's men made a flying start to take a 1-0 lead in the series when they outclassed their Southern African opponents by massive nine wickets in the first one-day on Thursday at the Khulna Divisional Stadium.

The Tigers have so far played three matches at this venue with two victories -- one against former world champions Sri Lanka and another against lowly Kenya. They lost the other match against Sri

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Coastguard killed after encounter with pirates

One each from Rab, Coast Guard missing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

One Coast Guard member was killed and one each from the Coast Guard and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) went missing following an encounter between the law enforcers and a gang of pirates in the Pashur estuary near Mongla on Friday night.

Coast Guard Amiral Islam, his colleague Kabir and Rab personnel Kanchan fell in the river with their firearms after a fight with the pirates.

The body of Amiral and his firearms were recovered from the place of incident after a massive recovery operation by the Navy, Rab and Coast Guard yesterday. Navy divers were searching for the missing two as of 9:00pm yesterday.

Commanding Officer of Rab-6 Lt Col Shams told The Daily Star that during a joint drive of Coast Guard and Rab in the River Pashur, the law enforcers challenged an engine boat carrying the pirates in Mongla

Channel at around 9:30pm.

Being challenged, the pirates opened fire on them to which they also retaliated in self-defence, the Rab commander said. At one stage of the clash, the criminals stopped firing and the joint team members got a chance to get on board the engine boat.

"As the joint team members boarded the pirates' boat, the criminals wrestled with them and hit them with sticks," Lt Col Shams said. During this scuffle, four joint team members, fell in the river. One of them, Captain Mehedi of Rab, however, managed to swim back to the boat, while the rest three went missing.

By this time, the pirates jumped into the river and swam across it.

The law enforcers seized the engine boat of the pirates and recovered 40 rounds of ammunition and two mobile phone sets from the boat.

6,050 with disability to work as polls observers

SHEIKH SABIHA ALAM

As many as 6,050 people with mobility, visual and hearing impairment are going to work as election observers for the parliament elections in 2007 while in 2001 the number of such performers was 365.

Conveying the information on the eve of the International Day of Disabled Persons -- December 3, Action on Disability and Development (ADD) President Mosharrar Hossain said, "This time we are stronger than ever and determined to do our duties properly."

"October 1, 2001 was not like the other bad days. Rather, I could take it as an Eid day," said a beaming Umme Kulsum Ranjana.

The woman with mobility impairment was sharing her experience as an election observer in 2001.

But prior to taking part in the responsible job, the physically challenged people had to face hurdles.

Following formation of a committee at Baroipara union in Kushtia in 1995, the disabled people started thinking of participating at the democratic process.

If democracy means government of the people, by the people and for the people, democratic Bangladesh must pay heed to the demands of the disabled people, said Umme Kulsum.

The thought was their guiding force and the disabled people decided to articulate their needs. To get legal support to forge a movement, five persons with mobility impairment took the trouble to undertake a seven-day journey to Dhaka on wheel chairs. They submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister's Office and to the then speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad. British High Commissioner David Carter gave them a reception.

Subsequently 'Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act-2001' was passed in the Jatiya Sangsad.

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Hasina for suitable poll atmosphere

Asks CA to detail steps to be taken

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged President and Chief Adviser to the Caretaker Government Iajuddin Ahmed to state clearly what measures he will take for creating an atmosphere suitable for a fair election.

"Give us the details of what you will do to make the atmosphere suitable for a fair election. Please resign from post of the chief adviser and appoint someone else if you cannot work neutrally. Otherwise the people will have to take measures against you," Hasina said while addressing a teachers'

national convention in Dhaka Engineers' Institute Auditorium.

She also said leaders and cadres of BNP-Jamaat alliance gobbled up crores of taka during the last five-year tenure of the alliance in power and now they want to steal votes by keeping Iajuddin at the forefront.

AL-led 14-party coalition has given Iajuddin enough time to take initiatives for creating an atmosphere for a fair election, and considering the sufferings the people had to endure during the recent blockades, Iajuddin has misused the time, she added.

"We are not in politics to make people suffer. We demonstrate to

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UTTARA MEET Probe body seeks more time to submit report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The high-powered government committee probing the secret meeting of public servants at Uttara has sought more time from the establishment ministry.

The ministry sent the request to the president through the principal secretary Thursday night and the ministry is expecting a reply by tomorrow.

"We sent the proposal to the president Thursday night and we are expecting that a reply will come today," AFM Solaiman Chowdhury, establishment secretary, said.

The probe committee headed by M Abdul Aziz, agriculture secretary, is investigating all the previous similar incidents as per the

terms of references (TOR) of the circular issued by the establishment ministry.

Some political parties are alleging that the establishment ministry, in connivance with BNP, is trying to divert the public attention from serious allegations against the government officials as well as other issues.

"The probe committee has no way to change the terms of references of the government circular which means the probe body has to investigate all matters within the stipulated time which is impossible," a high official of the establishment ministry told The daily Star preferring anonymity.

The council of advisers in a

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AL afraid of polls

Says Khaleda

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has said Awami League (AL) leaders are afraid of polls sensing that people won't vote for them for their "destructive" politics.

"As they have no chance of winning the election, they are trying to push the country into

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Hills people to start war again if accord not implemented

Threatens Santu Larma

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chairman of Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, known as Santu Larma, said the CHT peace treaty

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Baghdad triple car bombings kill 40

20 others die as truck slams into bus stop

AGENCIES, Baghdad

Three massive car bomb blasts rocked the centre of the Iraqi capital Saturday, killing at least 40 people and wounding another 87, security officials said.

A medic in the city's Al-Kindi hospital confirmed 34 deaths and said 56 people were receiving treatment after the explosions, which ripped through a crowded street as Iraqis were hurrying home before nightfall.

A defence official told AFP the first blast had appeared to target an Iraqi army Humvee jeep patrolling in the central Rusafa district at sunset. There were soldiers among the casualties, but he could not say how many.

The second blast erupted immediately after the first with the third a few moments later, rocking win-

dows 500 metres (yards) away on the opposite bank of the Tigris. Shortly afterwards gunfire erupted around the city.

Ten shops were burned out in the blasts near Al-Wathba square, a historic commercial area popular with Shia Kurds, and 13 civilian cars destroyed, said an interior ministry official, warning the death toll was expected to rise.

Around an hour after the detonations, five more blasts were heard, apparently mortars fired by one of the city's warring armed groups.

Saturday's attack followed a major security operation the previous day a short distance further north in the Fadhel neighbourhood, in which Iraqi and US forces raided suspected insurgent hideouts and arrested 28 suspects.

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Prayer Timing		
December 3		
	Azan	
Fair	5-15	5-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-19	5-22
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation