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Hasina honoured

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said: "Your (Hasina) insistence on speaking the truth made you dangerous to tyrants."
"They (tyrants) confined you to your father's house. But they never imprisoned your spirit," Westling said.
"There, chatelaine of your father's home and of his legacy, you lived in the freedom known only to the brave. And now, a quarter of a century after your father realised his dream of an independent Bangladesh, you have restored the course of democracy."
Earlier, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, attired in ceremonial costume, was led to the dais in a procession led by the University President, Jon Westling.
The national anthem of the two countries were played and the Holy Quran recited by Imam Talal Eid, Religious Director of the Islamic Centre for New England.
Westling said: "Your father gave Bangladesh life at the cost of his own. At frequent cost of your liberty and the continual risk of your life, you have restored your country's democratic birthright."
"With an eloquence that is as simple as it is incisive, you have defined your goal for the people of Bangladesh: 'Bread and ballot.'"
Westling said too often, the people of the Third World had been told that they must exchange the ballot for bread and had ended up with neither. "Under your courageous leadership, Bangladesh will have both."
Accepting the rare honour, the Bangladesh premier thanked the Boston University authorities for choosing her for this honour and addressed the world leaders' forum at the university.
"I'm delighted to receive the degree of Doctor of Laws. I would like to thank Boston University for choosing me for this honour. I accept this on behalf of my people who have elected me to lead them into the 21st century."
Hasina said: "The honour that you have given me today has a deep meaning for me reinforcing my sense of duties and responsibilities to the people and the country I belong - the country for which my father, my mother, and three brothers gave their tears, sweat and blood."
"For us there is no ideal more dominant than democracy, here is no foundation of democracy stronger than freedom and there is no greater guarantee for freedom than civilised law."
The World Leaders' Forum was created at Boston University in 1985 in order to bring international leaders and other key policymakers from around the world to the university.
Among those honoured by the Forum were President George Bush, French Prime Minister Francois Mitterrand, Corazon Aquino of the Philippines, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevarnadze, Israeli Prime Minister Isaac Shamir, King Hussein of Jordan, Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu, Chilean president Eduardo Frei, Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik B Hariri and Alfonso Valdivieso Sarmiento, prosecutor General of Colombia.

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Jatiya Party chairman former president H M Ershad hosted an Iftar in honour of journalists at a city hotel yesterday.

Khairul Kabir's janaza tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent
The body of Khairul Kabir arrived in the city from Singapore last night. Kabir, a reputed banker and former journalist, died of lung cancer at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore Thursday night. He was 76.
The namaj-e-janaza for Kabir will be held at Baitul Mukarram mosque after Zohr prayers tomorrow. He will be buried at his family graveyard at Ghorasal. Till then his body will be kept at his Gulshan residence in the city, according to family sources.
The quikhwani of Khairul Kabir will be held after Asr prayers on Monday at his residence at House No 1A, Road No 4 in Gulshan.

Brunei to recruit Bangladeshi workers

By Staff Correspondent
A high-level official delegation led by Labour and Manpower Secretary Mahe Alam is scheduled to return home today after holding talks with officials in Brunei on manpower export.
According to official sources, the government of Brunei has expressed its willingness to recruit workers from Bangladesh.
Earlier, some 100 Bangladeshis who had no valid work permit were repatriated.
On the first leg of its visit, the four-member delegation had talks with Malaysian authorities on Monday last on the issues of illegal workers and fresh export of manpower from Bangladesh.

Meat prices

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have also increased marginally.
However, the prices of fine rice have been found stable. According to its varieties, each kg of fine rice is being sold at Tk 24-26 per kg while Chingura and Kaljira are being sold at Tk 28 to 34. Other items, required for Eid special dishes, like simal and lassa are being sold at Tk 24 to 30 according to its brand. Dried grapes costs Tk 65 to 90 per kg, cinnamon Tk 120 to 160, clove Tk 80 to 140 and cardamom Tk 240 to 400. Sugar price remains stable at Tk 30 to 32.
Prices of other essentials, mainly vegetables, were found stable. One kg of garlic costs Tk 36 to 40, onion Tk 12 to 14, ginger Tk 24 to 30 and cauliflower and cabbage (medium sized) Tk 8 to 12.

Readymade garments sector

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two years. We are unable to bear it further, facing credit squeeze by banks," Sinha said.
"Banks are refusing to open back-to-back LC for those whose orders were cancelled due to the political upheavals. We do not want any special favour but normal bank-to-client relationship," he said.
At least 400 RMG units are in doldrums due to the banks' "unfriendly" attitude. They cannot open LCs despite orders in their hands, he added.
The BGMEA president identified the insurance cost as one of the principal impediments hedging the cost efficiency. "We are being charged at the rate fixed in the early eighties when the export turnover was a meagre 200 million dollars. The insurance companies are charging us 1.2 per cent in category C insurance without theft and pilferage, which is double the rate in the neighbouring countries."
Banks charge about one per cent acceptance charge when LC is accepted. Prior to that, they charged point 75 to point 80 per cent. The rates are not found anywhere. "Unless insurance and bank charges are competitive with our rivals we cannot have the cutting edge over them," Sinha said.
He demanded an effective Apparel Board for the RMG sector along with single pool customs and accounting, backward linkage with government patronisation and splitting the composite textile mills in different parts of the country having basic infrastructural support like power, gas, water and roads for its growth.
On the backward linkage, he said there has to be a master plan for it before it is too late.

"Under the World Trade Organization ground rules, the playing field will be level in future. The quota system will disappear totally in the next century. Unless we have total indigenous contents, our exports will slump because of the cost disadvantage."
Looking at the future, the BGMEA president said the apparel prices have declined world over but the consumers are placing stress on quality, which we have fulfilled. Ultimately we can make it a ten billion dollar industry if we have requisite support.
Engr Abu Taher, a leading RMG manufacturer, says abolition of quota system in future will be the biggest threat to the industry.
"Unless we emphasise on developing backward linkage," Engr Abu Taher said, "we face a bleak situation." At the same time we need to adjust the currency rates to maintain competitiveness with the neighbouring competitors," he added.
Echoing his warning, Mostafa Golam Kuddus, another leading manufacturer, who specialises on knitwear and sweater, said the RMG sector is charged point 25 p.c. advance tax or source tax on full Freight on Board (FOB) value. During BNP rule it was one per cent. Then it was reduced to point 50 p.c. Later it came down to point 25 p.c. But it was suspended during the caretaker government of Justice Habibur Rahman to give a respite to the RMG sector gasping under the after-shock of the political turmoil earlier.
He said the new government reimposed the point 25 p.c. source tax. Besides, he said, the RMG sector is also facing complications and often harassments by tax people on tax holiday returns. There is no clear cut policy on the extent of tax holiday, he added.
Citing the problems of the sweater and cashmere manufacturers, Kuddus said they are suffering from the 25 per cent local content rules for the high valued item that is eroding the competitiveness with the neighbouring countries by at least 25 dollars.
He also said the knitwear manufacturers are unable to obtain GSP certificates since January 23 from the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) due to unexplained reasons.

11 JCD activists

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Golam Rasul, Siddhirganj thana unit JCD joint convener Mamunur Rashid, eight other JCD leaders - Monir Hussain, Selim Mia, Mainuddin, Quamruzzaman, Md Dulal, Shahin Hussain, Khaled Shams Helal, and Shyamol - a guard of the college, Masud Mia.
A case was registered in this connection and the arrested persons are scheduled to be produced before court today.

Road accidents

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The victims were identified as Mohammad Yusuf, 35, a truck driver, and an unidentified truck helper, 25.
In Sirajganj: Two people were killed and two others injured in separate road accidents in Sirajganj on Bogra-Natore highway.
Police and witnesses said Monira, 11, was run over by a Bogra-bound truck at Bhuiyaga in Raiganj thana at about 10 am. The truck driver fled the scene immediately after the accident.
In another accident, an unidentified man, aged about 35, died and two others were injured when they fell down from the roof of a Nagarbari-bound bus at Chandarkona in Raiganj thana at about noon.
The bus driver and his helper managed to escape. Two cases were filed with Raiganj thana.
In Mirzapur, a minor girl was killed and 30 home-bound people were injured in two road accidents in Mirzapur thana on Dhaka-Tangail highway.
Police said Nazreen Akhtar, 5, daughter of Malek Miah of Kurni village, was run over by a Tangail-bound bus from Dhaka while she was playing beside the road at about 1:30 pm.
In another road accident 30 people were injured, two seriously, when a Bhuapur-bound bus from Dhaka overturned at Daohata in the same thana.
Of the injured, two were admitted to Mirzapur Kumudini Hospital.

Arteaga claims

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and Admirals said in its statement.
Arteaga's move implicitly rejected the swearing in of Fabian Alarcon as interim president Thursday by Congress. Alarcon had been Congress president up to then.
Bucaram was barricaded today inside the national palace, said he won't turn over the government to congressional conspirators.
Troops were sent to the palace to provide security, but the military said it wasn't taking sides in the dispute.
Earlier, protesters demanding that Bucaram leave the national palace, which was protected by barbed wire, tried to push their way across the plaza to the building entrance Thursday night, but troops drove them back with volleys of tear gas. (Earlier story on page 8)

NEWS OF GOLD

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