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Nat'l flag flown at half-mast atop Khaleda's official residence

By Staff Correspondent
The National Flag was flown at half-mast atop the Minto Road official residence of Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad and BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia on the National Mourning Day on August 15.

However, the opposition leader did not turn up at her official residence on the day.

Some party workers tried to fly the National Flag at full-mast but the on-duty security personnel obstructed them, saying that there was a government order in this regard, witnesses said. Some press photographers were also barred from taking snaps of the half-mast National Flag there.

On August 15 last year, the National Flag was flown at full-mast atop her official residence where her birthday was celebrated gorgeously. This year, Begum Zia decided to forego festivity on her birthday in view of

5 get life-term for kidnapping 2 boys in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Aug 16: Five people were awarded life sentence by a special court here today for kidnapping two minor boys in 1996, reports UNB.

The convicts are Jasimuddin, Jahangir Alam, Liakat Ali, Abu Taher Redwan and Nurul Absar.

According to the prosecution story, they kidnapped M Yasin alias Sohel, 9, son of M Haroon and M Ismail alias Jaded, 10, son of the Shamsul Alam of Hathazari thana from Gouradabari of Purba Shikarpur on December 1, 1996 while they were going to school.

The kidnapers demanded Tk 20 lakh as ransom from Haroon by telephone.

Police recorded the telephonic conversation, confirmed the whereabouts of the kidnapers, arrested them 4 days later and rescued the two boys following their confessions.

President visits flood-hit areas in city

President Shahabuddin Ahmed visited some flood affected areas in and around the city yesterday morning, reports UNB.

During his two-hour extensive visit from 5:15 am, the President went to Tejgaon Industrial area, Gulshan, Badda, Ghat, Baridhara, north, south and central Badda, Dhour near Savar, Aminbazar and Turag river junction.

He also got down at Badda, Ghat and Dhour and talked to the flood affected people.

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Mr. Badrul Ameen Bar-At
Breathed his last on 15th August 1998 (Innahlillah.....Razeun). His Namaz-E-Janazah will be held at the Baitul Mukarram Mosque After Zuhr Prayers on the 17th August 1998. He will be buried at the Banani Graveyard on the same day.

His qulkhawni will be held on Tuesday the 18th August after Asr prayers at the Dhanmondi Women's Complex Road 10A (New) Plot No. 22. All relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to attend and pray for his departed soul.

IRA splinter group suspected

Car bomb blast kills 28 in N Ireland

OMAGH, Northern Ireland, Aug 16: A car bomb that killed 28 people and injured 220 — the worst single attack in three decades of conflict in Northern Ireland — demonstrates the ability of diehard dissidents to sabotage Northern Ireland's peace agreement, reports AP.

The blast in Omagh, a religiously mixed town 110 km west of Belfast, came less than three months after voters in both parts of Ireland overwhelmingly approved plans for a new Northern Ireland government with power shared between its majority Protestants and minority Roman Catholics.

Prime Minister Tony Blair who visited the spot told reporters the attack was "a blast of evil" perpetrated by "a tiny, fanatical group of people" without any support in Northern Ireland.

"We will not let these people wreck the future — the future belongs to the decent people of Northern Ireland; it does not belong to the criminals and psychopaths," he said.

Police said a misleading telephone warning caused them to move people close to a car packed with an estimated 220 kilos of explosives.

"We have had men, women and children slaughtered here this afternoon, slaughtered by murderers who wanted to murder... who gave us a totally inaccurate warning," a visibly moved Ronnie Flanagan, Northern Ireland's police commander, said at the scene.

Flanagan said in a BBC TV interview Sunday that he had established a special taskforce to investigate the killings, and pointed initial blame for the bomb at an IRA splinter group.

"It is fair to say that our focus at this point in time would be on those who call themselves the 32 County Sovereignty Movement, and those close to them," Flanagan said that the group also called itself the "Real IRA."

IRA dissidents, who are committed to shattering the outlawed group's 13-month-old truce and the April peace accord it helped inspire, have planted several car bombs in other Northern Ireland towns in recent months, which caused many injuries but no deaths, and on July 10 British and Irish

Nine die in Munshiganj Flood situation grim in 12 districts

The flood situation in 12 districts worsened further yesterday due to onrush of water from the upper riparian with 10 more deaths reported from across the country, reports UNB.

Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre forecast that the situation will continue to deteriorate further across the country, including capital Dhaka and its adjoining areas.

The situation may remain unchanged only in upper part of the Meghna basin.

According to monitoring reports of the FFWC, rivers in the country's four basins were flowing above the red mark at 20 points.

The Relief Ministry Control Room said of the deaths, nine were reported from Munshiganj district alone while the rest one from Narayanganj, raising the total death toll to 290.

The districts where the flood situation deteriorated are: Dhaka, Munshiganj, Manikganj, Narayanganj, Faridpur, Madaripur, Rajbari, Shariatpur, Gaibandha, Chandpur, Brahmanbaria and Sirajganj.

The flood situation in Jamalpur, Bogra and Kurigram remained static.

According to the FFWC bulletin, Brahmaputra-Jamuna and Padma recorded rise at all points. Rivers in the Meghna basins showed both rise and fall while all rivers in the south-eastern Hill basin receded.

The rivers which continued to flow above the danger level are: Jamuna at Bahadurabad.



Clinton to apologise?

LONDON, Aug 16: US President Bill Clinton is preparing to apologise to the US people for undermining the dignity of his office with an "inappropriate" relationship with Monica Lewinsky, it was reported yesterday, says AFP.

The London Sunday Times cited White House sources as saying that they expected Clinton to issue a public mea culpa explaining the nature of his relationship with Lewinsky, who reportedly has said they had sex, after he testifies to a grand jury tomorrow.

According to these sources, the US president is reluctant to make the apology on television as he fears it would humiliate his wife Hillary and daughter Chelsea, and is more likely to issue it in a written form.

The Sunday Times said Clinton, who is scheduled to testify

Khaleda iterates demand Form relief committee, open gruel kitchen

By Special Correspondent
BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia has reiterated her demand for formation of all-party relief committee and opening of gruel kitchen to save the flood victims who, she claimed, are yet to get any attention from the government.

"This government has failed to deliver any succour to the affected people although the entire country has been flooded," she alleged at a number of wayside gatherings during her visit to different parts of Munshiganj district yesterday.

The leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad distributed relief materials among the people during her visit to flood affected Sirajdikhan, Tongibari and Loughajang thanas, accompanied by local BNP leaders and MPs Shamsul Islam Khan and Mizanur Rahman Sinha.

She also addressed a public meeting at Loughajang after visiting Balurchar, Lutubali, Sirajdikhan thana headquarters, Taltala bazar, Ballgaon, Khidirpur and Baromokam.

Hundreds of people in different parts of the district were seen receiving relief materials.

AC Akram's admission to PG prison cell Rubel's father to file case

By Staff Correspondent
Lawyers of Rubel's father are preparing to lodge a complaint with the CMM's court against admission of AC Akram Husain to the prison cell of Bangabandhu Medical University Hospital.

"Admission of AC Akram to the prison cell of the PG Hospital is violative of the jail code and an act of the home ministry which undermines the judiciary," Alina Khan, one of the lawyers, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Akram, principal accused in the Rubel murder case, was taken to the prison cell of the PG Hospital as an outdoor patient at about 5:00 pm on August 10 without any court order.

Akram was placed on a three-day CID remand on August 9 but was admitted to the hospital after six hours of interrogation the next day.

Sec 54: 1400 held in city between Jan-Mar this yr

By Staff Correspondent
At least 1400 people were arrested in the city under Section 54 of the CrPC during the first three months of the year, the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka, informed the one-man judicial commission yesterday, sources said.

The Commission, probing Rubel murder in the DB custody, had however asked for a 'comprehensive report' from the CMM on how many people arrested under Section 54 were released and how many were charged in cases subsequently.

The Commission also recorded statements and suggestions of KS Nabi, former Attorney General and Dr Faruk, a lawyer with working experience abroad, regarding the system of remand, investigation and amendment to Section 54, the sources said.

The Commission is likely to call some DB policemen today for further questioning.



People thronged the Bangabandhu Museum in the city to pay homage to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on National Mourning Day Saturday. — Star photo

Bangabandhu's death mourned

By Staff Correspondent
The National Mourning Day was observed in the country on Saturday with due solemnity marking the 23rd anniversary of death of the founder of independent Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

In the capital, all roads led to the Bangabandhu Bhaban at Dhanmondi as members of the public in their thousands thronged there from early morning to pay homage to the great leader.

Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, along with most of his family members and many close associates, were brutally gunned down on the fateful night of August 15, 1975 in a military putsch.

The day dawned with President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina placing wreaths at the portrait of Sheikh Mujib at the Bangabandhu Bhaban, now turned into Bangabandhu Museum.

A smartly turned out contingent of the Armed Forces played the last post as the President and the Prime Minister stood there for some time in solemn silence after placing wreaths.

Special prayers were offered there seeking divine blessings for eternal peace of the departed souls of Bangabandhu, his family members and others who embraced martyrdom on August 15.

Members of the Council of Ministers, chiefs of the three services, heads of diplomatic missions and international organisations, high officials and politicians also paid tributes to the great leader. Dean of the diplomatic corps Mohammad Shahta Zarab also placed wreaths.

The day was a public holiday and the National Flag was flown at half-mast atop all government and private buildings.

The state-run electronic media put up special programmes marking the day while all the national dailies brought out supplements highlighting the life and works of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The day was observed with due honour and solemnity at Bangladesh missions abroad, reports reaching the capital said.

The programmes of the day included destitute feeding, placing of wreaths at Bangabandhu's mazar at Tungipara and at graves of other martyrs of August 15 at Banani in the city, milad mahfils, offering special prayers, Qurankhwani, wearing of black badges, replaying the historic speeches of Bangabandhu and screening of documentaries.

After placing wreaths at Bangabandhu's portrait at Dhanmondi, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited the capital said.

Trial of killers must go ahead: PM

TUNGIPARA, Aug 16: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Saturday formally launched a project by handing over loans to some unemployed youths to generate self-employment, reports UNB.

"Grief and sorrow of losing my dearest ones have generated immense strength in my mind to do something for the wretched people... this strength, I work day and night for their welfare," she said in an emotion-charged voice.

Inaugurating the new programme, titled 'Thana Resources Development and Employment Project' at the Tungipara Thana compound, Hasina

7-party's mass hunger strike now on Aug 26

By Staff Correspondent
The BNP-led Seven-party Alliance has shifted its mass hunger strike programme to August 26 from August 18 in view of the deteriorating flood situation in the country.

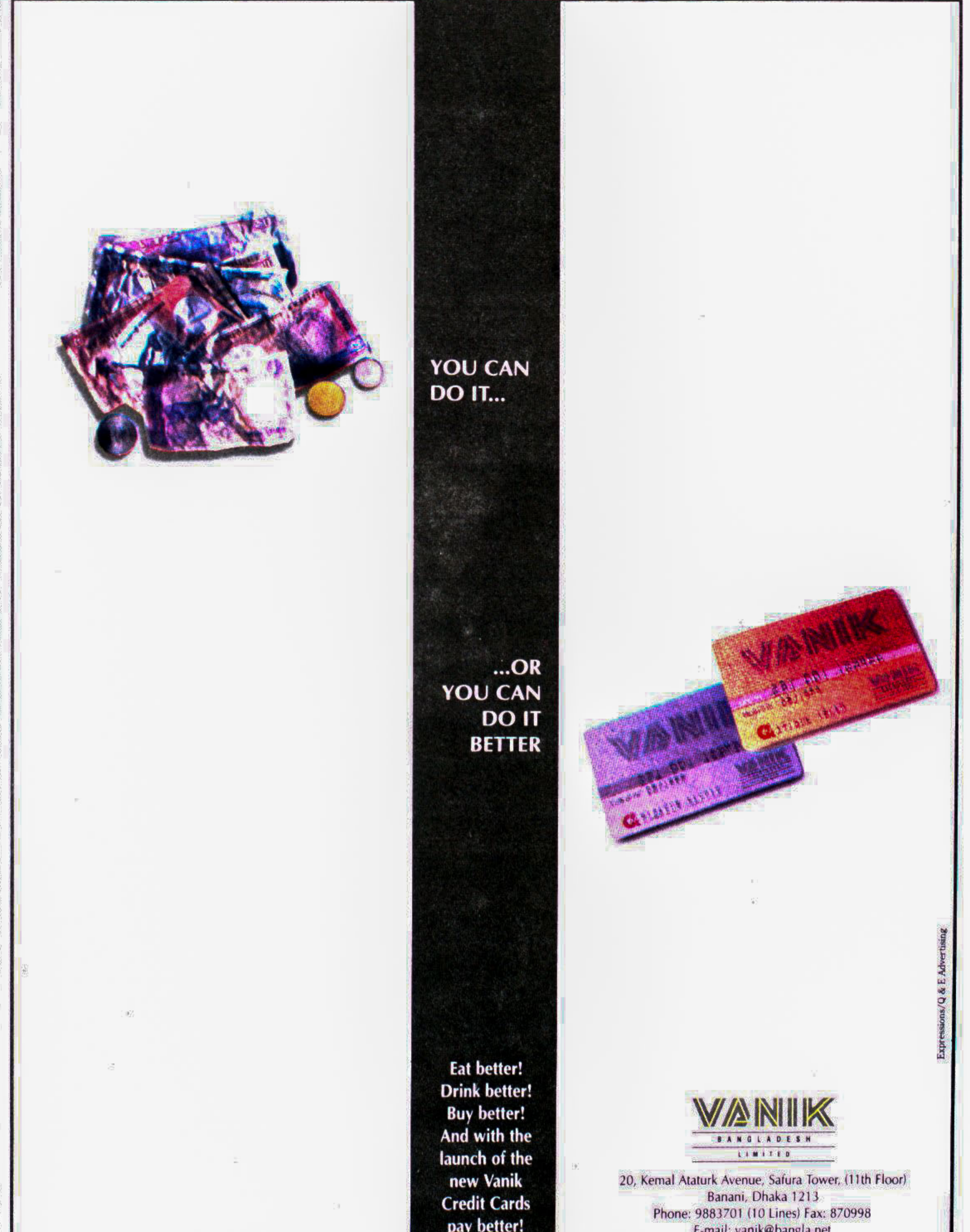
However, the venue of the day-long programme — Paltan Maidan — will remain unchanged.

The change in the date of the hunger strike planned to protest the 'deterioration' of law and order in the country, was decided at a meeting of the Alliance on Saturday. BNP standing committee member Abdus Salam Talukdar told The Daily Star last night.

50 fishermen still missing in Bay

From Our Correspondent
BARGUNA, Aug 16: At least 50 fishermen are still missing in the Bay after their trawlers and boats sank in high waves in the sea on Thursday.

Twenty-one trawlers and boats with about 100 fishermen sank in the Bay due to down-pour and storm in the sea during the night.



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