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Hasina tells Hathazari rally Resist vote thieves by joining city corpn polls

HATHAZARI, Oct 30: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today urged people to resist opposition's anti-election moves and protect their voting rights by joining the forthcoming city corporation elections, reports UNB.

Remain alert against the vote thieves. They (BNP-JP) have come down to street to snatch your right to vote. Resist the vote thieves by joining elections, she told a huge public meeting at Parbati High School here this afternoon.

The prime minister's call came hot on heels of the opposition decision of resisting the December 6 City Corporation elections in Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi.

"It is not clear to me why the opposition is planning to boycott the elections," Hasina said. If establishment of voting right is their demand, then how that will be possible without joining the vote, she questioned.

Responding to Opposition leader Khaleda Zia's remarks about resisting the elections at the cost of blood, the prime minister said there would be no need for the opposition leader to shed blood to stop these polls. The elections will take place on time and people will cast vote freely.

"There is no need for giving blood, rather come to parliament, and say whatever you want to say. Ask questions about whatever you want," Hasina said of her political opponent making an appeal for joining parliament, going into session on November 1.

The Prime Minister said ear-

lier she (Khaleda) had offered to give blood for blocking the Ganges water sharing treaty with India and peace agreement with the tribal leaders of the troubled Chittagong Hill Tracts.

But she (Khaleda) did not shed a single drop of blood. Hasina quipped and foretold her audience that this time also she would not have to give blood.

Both city corporation and upazila elections will be held in the country and people will exercise their franchise, the prime minister asserted.

She said through a long struggle, the ruling party had restored people's franchise and reiterated that the government would hand over power to a non-party caretaker government at the end of its tenure and the people would choose their representatives according to their will.

Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed, AL presidium member Abdul Jalil, Housing and Public Works Minister Engineer Mosharrar Hossain and Labour and Employment Minister MA Mannan, also addressed the meeting. Hathazari Thana AL president Prof Mohammad Ismail presided.

About local demands, the prime minister announced that Hathazari and Fatikchhari thanas would be upgraded to municipalities, digital lines be installed in Hathazari and local health complex upgraded to 100-bed hospital.

Local Agriculture Institute will also be upgraded to a full-fledged Agriculture College, the prime minister assured.



Police in riot gear at the entrance of BNP central office at Naya Paltan in the city in a bid to thwart a scheduled JCD procession yesterday. —Star photo

How dare he refuse the old Gold!

ATLANTA, Oct 30: She made her way to the front of the crowd and demanded a kiss from President Bill Clinton. And though he seemed temporarily taken aback, she eventually got one, reports Reuters.

In situations like this, it probably helps to be 93 years old.

Ginger Gold, who described herself as being 93 and a half years old and a native of Hungary, interrupted the proceedings at a Friday evening event of the Anti-Defamation League in Atlanta where Clinton was due to speak. Before he could begin his remarks, she shouted from the front row: "I came to kiss you!"

Clinton had no snappy comeback handy and appeared momentarily flummoxed. He paused before beginning his remarks as Gold blew him kisses with both hands.

But after the speech was finished and he made his customary hand-shaking, back-slapping, hugging progress along the velvet rope at the front of the room, Clinton repeatedly kissed the gray-haired woman. She kissed him back with gusto and said, "I love you."

She told him she worked at a Veterans Administration Hospital, and that she had a gift for Clinton but had not been allowed to bring it into the room where he spoke. Clinton aides asked her to send it to the White House.

Towering inferno kills 52 in ROK city

SEOUL, Oct 30: Fifty-two people were killed and 56 others were injured in a blaze that engulfed a four-storey building in the western port city of Incheon today, AFP quoting television reports said.

The fire broke out as workmen carried out electrical repairs in an underground karaoke bar, starting a fire that ravaged the entire building, the reports said.

Most of the victims were in a bar on the second floor of the commercial building.

Television footage showed firefighters rushing unconscious victims away from the scene, carrying them on their shoulders and on stretchers. The 56 injured were taken to seven nearby hospitals.

"The fire started at the underground karaoke bar, where renovation work was just finished and employees were cleaning out the site," a witness was quoted as telling police.

More than 25 fire engines were mobilised to put the fire under control.

In July a holiday camp blaze in South Korea claimed 23 lives including those of 19 children.

A total of 15 people, including government officials, were arrested over the fire.

They were charged with various offences, including allowing the construction and operation of illegitimate premises, manslaughter, violation of building safety laws, corruption, abuse of power and forgery of official documents.

Under-trial prisoner dies at Chandpur

CHANDPUR, Oct 30: An under-trial prisoner died of heart attack at Chandpur Sadar Hospital here on Thursday, reports UNB.

Jail sources said Abdus Sattar, 46, of Gohat village in Kachua thana was arrested on October 17 and sent to the district jail in a dowry case.

He was admitted to the hospital after he fell sick on Wednesday.

Party activists assault Hathazari thana AL chief

CHITTAGONG, Oct 30: Hathazari thana Awami League president Prof Mohammad Ismail was assaulted by a group of party activists today who complained that they were not invited to the inaugural function of KEPZ where the Prime Minister was chief guest, reports UNB.

Police said party workers assaulted Prof Ismail when he came out of the function.

They also ransacked the thana AL office and some shops adjacent to it.

Police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

Earlier, police resorted to baton charge on unruly activists when they tried to enter the function.

Six alleged terrorists held from SBMC hostel

BARISAL, Oct 30: Police raided three student dormitories of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College (SBMC) here late last night and arrested six alleged terrorists.

They also recovered bomb-making materials from a room of the Hostel No 1 during the three-hour raid.

The arrested were identified as Zakir Hossain, Malek Sarder, Harun-or Rashid, Habibur Rahman Shahid and Sohel.

Red Crescent lottery draw today

The draw of the 5th Red Crescent Lottery would be held today at 3:00 pm at the BA Siddique Nursing School auditorium adjacent to Holy Family Red Crescent Hospital in the city, reports BSS.

A five-member panel of judges comprising eminent personalities of the country will conduct the draw, a Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BRCS) press release said yesterday.

A total of 312 prizes worth Tk 50 lakh would be given to the winners. The first prize money has been fixed at Tk 40 lakh while second at Taka five lakh.

Make tomorrow's hartal a success, Khaleda

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon the people to make tomorrow's countrywide hartal an all-out success to thwart the government's conspiracy to hold election to three city corporations "unilaterally," reports UNB.

Liaison committee of the BNP-led four-party alliance in an emergency meeting yesterday called the dawn-to-dusk hartal demanding cancellation of election schedule for Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi city corporations.

Khaleda in a statement said the government has announced the schedule of the three city corporation elections with an ill motive to hold the polls unilaterally keeping the opposition off the race. "The government wants to push the country into a state of conflict and chaos," she added.

She said people are carrying forward the movement for resignation of the "fascist" government and for general election. But, she alleged that government's sudden announcement of election schedule for three city corporations is aimed at misguiding the people, and to foil the current movement.

Khaleda said by-election to parliamentary seats and election to union parishes and municipalities under Awami League government were not free, fair and neutral. She said recent voterless bypolls in Faridpur had once again proved that any election under the Awami League government and the present Election Commission would not be impartial and fair.

Cotton mill fire Property worth Tk 50 lakh gutted

BARISAL, Oct 30: Property worth about Tk 50 lakh were gutted when a fire broke out at a cotton mill at BSCIC industrial area here yesterday, reports UNB.

Fire Service sources said the fire originated from an electric short circuit at about 1:30 pm and soon engulfed the entire mill.

Fire fighters rushed to the spot and brought the blaze under control after two and a half-hour.

A huge quantity of cotton and other valuables, including a cutting and a finishing machine, were destroyed in the fire.

Food transport contractors on strike in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, Oct 30: Food transport contractors at Khulna and Mongla ghats began an indefinite strike today in protest against terrorist activities allegedly by the accomplices of Ershad Shikdar.

The strike hampered unloading of about 1400 maunds of foodgrains from 30 barges at Mongla port.

"We have stopped unloading of foodgrains protesting illegal toll collection by Shikdar's men," said a leader of Khulna Foodgrain Transportation Contractors' Association.

The leaders urged the authorities to arrest the extortionists and threatened to continue the strike for noncompliance.

Boatman stabbed to death in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, Oct 30: Hossain Ali, 30, a boatman was beaten to death at Delta ghat at noon today by some of his rivals.

Police immediately arrested four persons suspecting their involvement in the murder.

According to police and eyewitnesses, Hossain Ali succumbed to severe injury on way to sadar hospital.

The murder was a sequel to previous quarrel over financial matters, eyewitnesses said. The arrested are Chandu, Abul Kalam, Shahid and Golam Mostafa. A murder case was recorded with Khulna thana this evening.

New phone, fax numbers of The Daily Star

The telephones and fax numbers of The Daily Star have been changed with the conversion of six digits into seven digits from Friday mid-night.

The new telephone numbers are: 8616771, 8616772, 8616773, 8616774, 8614670, 8613036. The fax number is 8613035.

Tornado hits village in Barguna

BARGUNA, Oct 30: A tornado swept over Golbonia village under Patharghata thana early today causing damage to houses, reports UNB.

Residents said the tornado hit the village at about 4:30 am and destroyed a dozen houses. More than 100 trees were uprooted during tornado that lasted only two minutes.

No casualty was reported.

Police outpost after sergeant Ahad's name

By Staff Correspondent
Dhaka Metropolitan Police has decided to name a police outpost in the city's Gulistan area after the name of sergeant Ahad Pervez, official sources said last night.

Ahad was killed by muggers while chasing an auto-rickshaw carrying them near Shapla Chattar in the city on Thursday night.

PM: KEPZ

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tries, computer software, frozen food, textile, jewelry, diamond cutting and polishing, she mentioned.

The Prime Minister said an Infrastructure Investment Facilitation Centre (IIFC) was set up, aided by World Bank, to facilitate private sector investment in ports, roads, energy, telecommunication and water supply sectors.

Hasina said her government inherited a fragile economy and took concrete steps to revamp it. As a result, growth rate could be maintained at more than five per cent despite last year's devastating flood.

She stressed sustained economic growth to ensure poverty alleviation.

The ground breaking ceremony was also addressed by, among others, Minister for Trade of the Republic of Korea Dr Han Duck Soo, Minister for Commerce and Industries Tofail Ahmed, Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mosharrar Hossain, Minister for Labour and Manpower Abdul Mannan, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Executive Chairman of the Board of Investment Mokammel Huq and Korean Ambassador Jung in Bangladesh Jung Young Jo, Chairman of KEPZ Kihak Sung read out the address of welcome.

Kihak Sung said that all investors in EPZs were concerned and confused at the recent surfacing of labour union issues.

He also referred to 'inadequate access road' to KEPZ, 'difficulties' at Chittagong Port and 'increased cost of import and export due to what he said frequent operational problems and world trade organisation matters and its consequences by 2005 after the withdrawal of textile quota.

Alamgir murder case Shikdar to be taken to Magura for questioning

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, Oct 30: Ershad Shikdar will be sent back to Jessore Central Jail tomorrow morning. On Monday he will be taken on a seven-day police remand in Magura district for questioning in connection with the murder case of Alamgir Reza Chowdhury, a contractor of Khulna Metropolitan Police.

Alamgir Reza was kidnapped from his village home in Magura and killed allegedly by Ershad and his accomplices at Skid Ghat. A case in this connection was recently recorded with Magura Sadar thana.

The three-member high-powered special team headed by Masudul Huq, Director, NSI arrived here this morning for the second time to verify confessional statements of Shikdar regarding his beneficiaries in the Police and Railway departments and political parties.

The second round of interrogation began this evening. The team carried out first round of interrogation from October 6 to October 11 when the notorious crime lord divulged startling information about his beneficiaries in the police department. He named four retired and three former police commissioners. But one of the former police commissions denied the charge of taking bribe from Shikdar during his tenure at KMP.

Mazharul Huq, DC (south), today said Ershad that Shova, the first wife of Shikdar, and Farid were taken to the KMP office for interrogation by the special team. Besides, the team will interrogate at least seven people not wanted in any case, but were known to Ershad for different reasons.

The DC (south) said statements of eight accused of different murder cases have so far been recorded under 164 by the CMM's Court. A source of KMP confirmed that Ershad would again be taken on remand by the middle of next month to have his judicial statement recorded under 164 which is indispensable for confirming his conviction.

Shahabuddin BCL activist held for killing JCD activist at Sylhet

From page 1
the President Ismail Hussain, Military Secretary Maj. Gen. A M Siraj, Director General (West Asia) in Foreign Ministry Razul Hasan, Press Secretary Rabinranath Tribedi and Chief of Protocol Muhammad Ziauddin.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed is visiting Turkish at the Suleyman Demirel who visited Bangladesh thrice in the last three years, the last time during the D-8 Summit this year. Demirel earlier came to Bangladesh on a bilateral visit and also during the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of Bangladesh's independence in which Nelson Mandela and Yassir Arafat also participated.

The visit to Turkey is seen as very significant for further development of cordial relations between the two countries. Turkey is the main initiator of the D-8 organisation, the second conference of which was held in Dhaka in March this year. Besides, Turkey is the only Muslim country to be a member of the NATO.

President Shahabuddin and President Suleyman Demirel will hold official talks later today to further strengthen the bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

The two Presidents will witness the signing of an agreement for avoiding double taxation by entrepreneurs of the two countries.

JCD brought out a mourning procession carrying the body of Jaglul in the town this afternoon. The procession was intercepted at different places by the police. Later the body of Jaglul was buried at a graveyard adjacent to the mazar of Hazrat Shahjalal (RA).

Jaglul was shot dead by some unidentified assailant yesterday afternoon. Officials said the arrested Alal Baksh, son of Rehan Ahmed, is one of the FIR-named accused in the murder case.

Tempo driver murdered in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent
BARISAL, Oct 30: A tempo driver was murdered by a gang of armed miscreants in Rahmatpur area in Babuganj thana of the district last night.

The victim was identified as Manik, 30, of Madhyapasha.

Police said, a gang of about 10 armed miscreants, swooped on Manik while he was returning home at around 9 pm. They hit Manik with lethal weapons and left the scene, leaving him dead.

Manik was murdered as a sequel to previous enmity over a land dispute, family sources said today.

Abdul Mannan, brother of the victim, today filed a case with Kotwali thana accusing 12 persons of killing his brothers.

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