

## Dhaka to seek \$ 2b at Paris meet

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh will seek around two billion dollars from donors at Bangladesh Development Forum meeting in Paris on March 13-14.

An aid memorandum figuring requirements will be placed at the Paris meeting, summary of which was approved at the cabinet meeting yesterday with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the chair.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman will shortly leave for the Paris meeting heading a Bangladesh delegation.

Sources close to the meeting said the memorandum would include requirements of US\$1.8 billion for project aid, US\$143 million for commodity aid and around US\$40 million for food aid.

Government strategy to alleviate

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## AL leaders not allowed to meet Bahauddin Nasim in jail

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League yesterday strongly criticised the government as a parliamentary delegation of the party was not allowed to meet Bahauddin Nasim, special assistant to opposition leader Sheikh Hasina, in Dhaka Central Jail.

The 11-member delegation led by senior Awami League leader Abdus Samad Azad went to the jail gate at 11:30 am yesterday. But the jail authority didn't allow them to meet Nasim, also joint convener of Awami Shechhasabak League.

"It's simply a violation of jail code, the constitution and ignorance of democratic and parliamentary norms," Samad Azad said addressing a hurriedly called press briefing at the Jatiya Press Club in the afternoon.

The AL leaders demanded immediate

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## US asstt secy due tomorrow

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christina Rocca will arrive tomorrow on a two-day official visit to Bangladesh.

She will meet Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and also hold talks with Foreign Minister Morshed Khan and senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She is also expected to hold meetings with a broad spectrum of political leaders including some belonging to the Opposition.

Sources said Rocca's visit is considered significant because a number of issues including political, economic and bilateral ones will come up for discussion at the highest level.

This is the first high-level visit by a US official to Bangladesh since the BNP-led coalition government took office in October last year.

### Announcement

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Mar 10		6-06 pm
Mar 11	6-12 am	

### Prayer Timings

Mar 10		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-15	5-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-09	6-13
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

# Opposition sponsoring crimes, says PM

## New law, if needed, to curb violence



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said the Awami League is sponsoring crimes only to upset law and order, and promised to do everything to curb violence even if it means enacting a fresh law.

"The opposition (the Awami League) has lost public support and finds no issue to agitate (against the government). Now they have taken the path of terrorism to disturb peace in the country," she said.

The prime minister repeated the allegation every time she was asked about the rising acts of crimes at a crowded news conference at the Proddhan Montri Bhaban (prime minister's house) in the capital

yesterday.

She convened the conference to brief journalists about her participation in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Australia last week, but she faced questions mostly on the country's deteriorating law and order.

Hinting at the recent arrest of the opposition leader's political aide, Bahauddin Nasim, Khaleda announced that her government would spare no-one if found guilty of creating a law and order.

Asked if she had any specific information about the opposition-sponsored acts of crimes, a visibly irritated prime minister said: "I do have information that the opposition is conspiring to deteriorate law and

order. They committed so many crimes and corruption while being in office that they are now trying to create a deadlock."

Khaleda, who heads the ruling BNP, flatly denied press reports that most of the arrested in connection with the recent crime acts belonged to her party. "I differ with you... all those nabbed belong to the opposition and one of them has already confessed what he did to disturb peace," she told a questioner.

She did not name the 'one' though, neither did she refer to the detained political aide to the opposition leader.

She however said some of her

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PHOTO: STAR

The ransacked room and broken door (inset) of the First Labour Court which was attacked by the Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal activists in Chittagong yesterday.

## Judge flees as Sramik Dal attacks Ctg court

SHAHIDUL ISLAM and ABDULLAH -AL MAHMUD, Chittagong

The judge fled his chamber and took shelter in a bathroom as activists of ruling BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal attacked the First Labour Court here during hearing of a case.

In the unprecedented incident, at least eight persons including three peons were injured when the hoodlums ransacked the court at Rahmatganj at about 11 am yesterday.

Police later rescued the judge, Hrishikesh Shah, from the bathroom.

The three court peons were injured as they tried to save the judge, police and witnesses said. They are Quddusur Rahman, Abdul Matin and Abdur Rob. Around 150 members of Chittagong Coaster Hedge Sramik Union (CCHSU) belonging to a faction of BNP came in four trucks, entered the court and ransacked it for over half an hour till police came. They damaged the dock and furniture and broke a door.

The attackers, some of them carrying hockey sticks and sticks, were led by Zebal Haq.

As police came, they started

fleeing but police nabbed 20 of them.

After controlling the situation, police asked a court peon where the judge was. He showed the bathroom. Police then rescued him.

Two rival groups in CCHSU, one backed by its president Zebal Haq and the other by its general secretary Md Aiyub Ali, are at odds for long. Both the groups belong to Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal, labour front of BNP, sources said. They are now locked in a legal battle over election of the workers' union as the tenure of its present committee

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## Experts 'no' to any dictated poverty reduction strategy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a convention yesterday urged the government to formulate a home-grown poverty reduction strategy in line with the next Five-year Plan and get it endorsed by the parliament after public scrutiny.

"The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) should not be something imposed on us by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF)," Prof. Rehman Sobhan, chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) said at the convention.

Peoples' Empowerment Trust (PET) and ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) co-organised the convention on 'Poverty Reduction Strategy: What, Why and for Whom' at the IDB Bhaban in the city.

Prof. Mozaffar Ahmed of Dhaka University, Chief Editor of the Daily Sangbad Ahmedul Kabir and President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) Yussuf Abdullah Haroon spoke.

Chairperson of PET Professor MM Akash presented the keynote paper, while Feisal Hussain of AAB read out the declaration of the convention.

"We believe that the process of developing a national poverty reduction strategy must not... be perceived as a threat to national sovereignty or of being closed and undemocratic," said the convention declaration.

The declaration also said the WB and the IMF should no more press Bangladesh to come up with the PRSP by this September if the country was to receive concessional funds.

Prof. Sobhan said the document to be taken to the Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF) in Paris cannot be considered as a political document of the government as it has not been discussed in the parliament.

The government did not initiate the process and also the poverty reduction

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## PDB plays with projects to favour a company?

RAZIUR RAHMAN

The Power Development Board (PDB) has changed a vital bidding criterion several times allegedly to award three power projects to a particular company.

The PDB floated international tenders for the 150MW Sylhet Combined Cycle Power Station and 150MW Chandpur Combined Cycle Power Station during the tenure of the caretaker government in September last year.

Besides, a second re-tendering of 80MW Tongi Gas Turbine Power Plant was also floated in October last year, soon after the expiry of the caretaker government's tenure. Earlier, an international tender and a re-tender were also floated for the same project during the Awami League regime.

Sources allege that arrangements have been made only to have an Indian company get the work. According to reliable sources the changes and amendments were made at the instruction of higher authorities.

PDB Chairman Syed Abdul Mayeed denied the allegation. "It may seem that the changes have been made to award the works to a particular company. However, these were made to encourage more competition."

The original criterion required that the bidders have experience of constructing similar or higher capacity power plants outside its own country and that such plants must be in commercial operation without disruption for at least two years.

Following amendments, the criterion now accommodates bidders with experience of constructing similar or higher capacity power plants in their own country, with one such domestic plant being in continuous commercial operation for a minimum of two years.

Sources said that the original criterion could ensure that the power plants

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## 7 planned Harun 3 murders in city

### PBCP refutes involvement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Seven people had planned the murder of journalist Shaikh Harun-Rashid and four of them took part in it.

One of the four fired a shot killing him on the spot, said IO of the case OC Shahidullah of Khalishpur thana.

Three motorbikes were used to follow Harun from Daulatpur and to take back the four assailants to the hideout where the murder was planned.

The IO said Harun was compelled to stop his motorbike at the place where he was shot dead.

The four killers were escorted by the rest three in a car, he said quoting witnesses. But the IO said he is yet to confirm it.

Meanwhile, the Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) has refuted allegation of its involvement in any way in the murder of Dainik Purbanchal reporter Harun.

"The party has the courage to claim responsibility for murder of any class enemy," said a fax message sent to Dainik Purbanchal on Friday by Shujan, a PBCP leader.

The message has created some confusion in the investigation, the IO said. "We may or may not believe

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STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A vegetable vendor, an alleged terrorist and an unidentified young woman were killed in separate incidents in the city yesterday.

Vegetable vendor Motaleb Hossain 35, was shot dead at an Agargaon sium; the alleged terrorist named Kalu alias Baita Kalu, 35, was chopped to death in Kamrangirchar; and the woman aged about 20 was slain in Mirpur area.

Police said unidentified miscreants called Kalu, a local 'terrorist', out of his house at about 12:00 midnight and took him near a match factory in Kamrangirchar. They chopped him in the neck and back indiscriminately before leaving him in a pool of blood.

Kamrangirchar police went to the spot at about 2:00am only to find him dead. The body was sent to Mitford Hospital morgue for autopsy. Father of four children and residence of

Matbar Bazaar, Kalu was an accused in a number of cases filed with Kamrangirchar and Lalbagh police stations.

Family sources said that Kalu had gone out with Tk 19,000 and that the miscreants might have ended up killing him trying to mug him.

Father of the victim Mojibar Rahman filed a murder case with the Kamrangirchar Police Station. Police arrested Babul, an accomplice of Kalu, from the match factory area yesterday suspecting his involvement in the killing and took him to custody.

In Mirpur, unidentified miscreants abducted and slain an unidentified young woman at Shah Alibagh yesterday. Mirpur police recovered the body near 100/C Shah Alibagh at about 7:00am and sent it to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital

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## Death threat to another journalist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Terrorists have given death threat to Moktar Hossain, Khulna correspondent of Dainik Bhorer Dak published from Dhaka.

According to a GD filed with Khulna thana yesterday, unidentified persons have been threatening him and his family over phone since Friday morning.

They are abusing him and asking him to 'get ready for eternal rest anytime.'

UNB adds: Some youths ransacked the office of a Kushtia daily 'Ajker Alo' yesterday.

Witnesses said the youths led by one Dulal stormed into the newspaper office at about 6:30am and damaged its furniture, windowpanes, doors and a TV set.

Meanwhile, police visited the office but no case was filed in this regard till filing of this report.



PHOTO: STAR

CHILDREN OF THE GAMES: Hundreds of little girls in colourful dresses throng one of the entrances to the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday to take part in rehearsals for tomorrow's opening ceremony of the Seventh Bangladesh Games.