

## Khaleda wants to erase our glorious history: Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday criticised the government, particularly Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, for "declaring a war against the country's independence."

"In a bid to hide the misdeeds of Jamaat-e-Islami in the War of Liberation and take revenge for its defeat, Khaleda wants to erase the country's glorious history, destroy the sovereignty and change the national anthem. She wants to make Bangladesh a vassal state of Pakistan," she said.

Hasina was speaking at the party's Dhamondi office in the afternoon when newly elected chairman of Manikganj pourasava Ramzan Ali meether.

Ziaur Rahman had started removing the glorious history of the liberation war, rehabilitating war criminals in politics and creating a stronghold of communal terrorists in the country, and his wife Khaleda Zia is now completing his unfinished tasks... She has declared a war against the country's independence," Hasina said.

Hasina said many distorted and wrong information have been included in the "Document of Independence" which the Liberation War Affairs Ministry has reprinted recently.

"They had earlier said Zia declared independence on March 27. They later shifted to March 26 and now they have taken up March 25. They spelled out three dates thrice like the birthday of Khaleda Zia. There might come a day when they will say that Zia didn't proclaim independence and thus deny the country's independence," she said.

Hasina said Khaleda cannot accept defeat in the liberation war and that is why she is taking revenge by erasing history and also to make Jamaat happy. "Distortion of history is taking place to enchain Bangladesh in slavery."

She said four EPR members who had broadcast the declaration of independence through wireless transmission were brutally killed later and she had found family members of one EPR member who could tell the truth.

The former premier said the BNP-Jamaat alliance government has let loose 70,000 terrorists across the country who are repressing the people. This government has destroyed all three important institutions Parliament, Administration and the Judiciary -- through politicisation, she said.

AL leader Motia Chowdhury, Obaidul Kader, Mukul Bose, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and Prof Nazma Rahman were present at the meeting.



Garment factory owners and workers took out a colourful procession at Rampura in the city yesterday to mark the World Population Day. Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and UNFPA jointly organised the programme.

## Involve more women in local bodies for sustainable dev

Speakers tell SAP-Bangladesh workshop

BSS, Dhaka

Speakers at a workshop yesterday stressed the need for ensuring participation of more women in the local bodies to achieve sustainable development in the South Asian countries.

They were addressing the inaugural session of a three-day workshop on 'South Asia Regional Forum on Women and Local Governance: Focus on Local Government' organised by South Asia Partnership (SAP)-Bangladesh with support from CIDA at Sheraton Hotel in the city.

The main objective of the workshop is to develop a common understanding for women development and strengthening local bodies in South Asia by exchanging knowledge and expertise. The workshop will also identify problems to address the issues concerned.

Addressing the workshop as the chief guest, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr Kamal Uddin Siddiqui said good governance and strengthening of institutions are the key issues of the government. "We are reforming the local government institutions gradually to revitalise

those," he said.

"Over the years, the government took some steps to make the local governments transparent, accountable and functional," he said adding that that is why more and more women have been participating in various activities of the local bodies including union parishads, Gram Sarkars and pourasabhas.

Dr Siddiqui said there are many projects for women empowerment on education, healthcare, microcredit and self-employment.

With chairman of the SAP Asru Kana Das in the chair, Executive Director of the Institute of Social Science of India Dr George Matthew addressed the function as the special guest.

SAP Executive Director Syed Nurul Alam, Interim Executive Director of the SAP-International of Sri Lanka Dr Rohit Kumar Nepal, Prof Zerina Rahman and Executive Director of the SAP-Canada Richard Harmsen also spoke.

Dr Rohit blamed political and democratic systems of South Asia for failure to bring about a change in the practices of governance in the South Asian countries, which was hindering sustainable development

of women in the region.

Nurul Alam said keeping nearly half of the population mute and out of participation in the development activities eventually cripples the whole process of social development. When women are excluded from the structure of governance, consequences are obvious, he said.

Besides, the host country, delegates from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Canada took part in the workshop.

## FM leaves for Vietnam

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan left here for Hanoi yesterday on a three-day official visit to Vietnam.

During the visit, he will hold bilateral talks with his Vietnamese counterpart and meet Minister of Trade. He will also call on President Tran Duc Luong and Prime Minister Phan Van Khai.

He will also meet with leaders of Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

## JCD-BCL clash at Khulna college: 12 hurt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A clash between the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) at Azam Khan Govt. Commerce College in Khulna left 12 students injured yesterday.

Five seriously injured students are now undergoing treatment at Upasham Clinic.

According to police, the clash erupted following an altercation between leaders of two rival student organisations over the coming election of the students' union.

Armed with brickbats and clubs, the activists attacked their rivals during the clash that continued for over 20 minutes until police stepped in.

Among the injured, seven are BCL workers while five others are aligned to JCD.

The BCL accused the JCD leaders of launching the attack without any provocation.

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## NATIONAL MEDICAL UNIVERSITY Body to scrutinise draft law

BSS, Dhaka

The cabinet yesterday discussed the proposed National Medical University Law-2004 to bring country's all medical institutions under a national medical university in the greater interest of a balanced development of medical education.

The meeting decided to form a committee to further scrutinise the draft law aimed at providing more quality medicare services to the people and development of medical education.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia presided over the meeting at Prime Minister's office.

The non-agricultural khas land management and lease policy-1995, Amendment and Yearly leasing out of non-agricultural khas land also came up for the discussion.

The cabinet also directed the land ministry to strengthen the proposal considering the protection of the greater public interest.

Besides, a draft law on Jatiya Sangsad (reserved Women Seats) Elections Law-2004, was placed at the meeting. The cabinet also discussed different aspects of election process of reserved women seats.

It decided to discuss in details the issue of holding elections to reserved women seats free from fault.

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