

AL labels  
PM's speech  
total lie

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) yesterday rejected the prime minister's address to the nation and described as 'all lies' the speech which was broadcast over radio and television on Monday marking the coalition government's four years in power.

Bashing the BNP-led ruling alliance for 'failure' to ensure the safety of the countrymen, AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil at a press conference reiterated his party's demand for immediate resignation of the government.

Citing instances of lawlessness and violence during the four-year rule, Jalil said the alliance now has no right to remain in power.

He said in last four years, as many as 37,862 people were killed, 1,60,923 suffered political persecution, and 65,742 women and children were tortured, raped, abducted or trafficked.

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TREMOR

# Hopes for survivors fade fast

REUTERS, Muzaffarabad

Hope was fading yesterday of finding survivors among thousands buried under houses and schools by an earthquake in northern Pakistan and rescuers pleaded for more helicopters to bring relief to remote areas.

President Pervez Musharraf's government sought more international support for a disaster that officials in the worst-hit areas of Pakistani Kashmir and the North West Frontier Province said may have claimed up to 40,000 lives.

Another 2,000 people are feared to have been killed across the border in Indian Kashmir.

The United States pledged an initial \$50 million for emergency aid. Several

transport aircraft have been sent with relief supplies, heavy equipment and a humanitarian coordination team and further flights were due to arrive on Tuesday.

European nations, Japan and Gulf Arab states also stepped forward with similar offers of support.

The official death toll from the quake -- at 7.6 magnitude the biggest to hit the region in a century -- remained at 21,000 in Pakistan and slightly over 1,200 in India.

Asked about reports that around 30,000 to 40,000 people had been killed, Pakistan's Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed told Reuters: "It's all guesswork. Our figures are 20,000 plus."

Reuters reporters flying over

stricken areas saw villages and towns flattened. Nearly every building in Muzaffarabad, a once-pretty river town that is the capital of Pakistani Kashmir, was destroyed or damaged.

Rescuers, many of them desperate relatives scrambling with their bare hands, worked through the rubble in the hope that they might be able to save trapped people.

Medical experts say an unhurt man can last for three days without water and a woman four days, which means time is running out -- although in such catastrophes there are often stories of miraculous survival.

"We are still looking for bodies in the debris," said A.M. Khandy, deputy commissioner in the Indian

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HC asks cops not  
to arrest chief  
whip's sons

UNB, Dhaka

A vacation bench of the High Court (HC) yesterday ordered police not to harass or arrest two sons of Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain in the extortion cases pending with the Speedy Trial Tribunal, Dhaka.

The interim order of the court

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Fitra fixed  
at Tk 33

UNB, Dhaka

This year's fitra has been fixed at Tk 33 per head, according to an announcement of the Islamic Foundation yesterday.

The decision was taken at a meeting on 'sadrkatul fitra' at the Islamic Foundation yesterday with its Acting Director General MA Badruddoza in the chair.

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PHOTO: STAR

Children at the Secretariat Day Care Centre get locked in the home as the employees of the centre, along with those of five others in the city, observe a strike demanding their 15 months' arrear dues yesterday. Since the government's childcare project ended in June last year, the employees have not received any salary or allowances.



PHOTO: STAR

Hindu devotees observe Kumari Puja during the maha astami of Durga Puja on the premises of Ramkrishna Mission temple in the capital yesterday.

## Lack of free flow of information creates room for graft

APPG, Manusher Jonno  
dialogue told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a dialogue in the city yesterday said people are in the dark about government functioning due to the lack of free flow of information, which creates room for corruption.

They stressed effective functioning

of the Jatiya Sangsad to ensure the government's accountability and provide adequate information to the people about it.

The government as well as corporate bodies are subject to very weak accounting control and do not

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2 killed in Rab,  
cop 'crossfire'

STAR REPORT

A district-level leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) was killed in an 'encounter' with Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Comilla early yesterday while in Khulna, an outlawed party operative died in police action on Monday night.

Our correspondent from Comilla reports: A listed criminal, Quamrul Islam Khan, 28, was the organising secretary of BCL, the student wing of the main opposition Awami League (AL). He hailed from Thakurpara

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## Insurgents kill 44 Iraqis

Convoy of Arab League envoys  
ambushed

AP, AFP, Baghdad

Insurgents determined to wreck Iraq's constitutional referendum killed more than 40 people and wounded dozens in a series of attacks yesterday, including a suicide car bomb that ripped

apart a crowded market in a town near the Syrian border, police said.

US and Iraqi officials have repeatedly warned that the insurgents would step up their attacks to

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JCD cadres blast  
bombs at Buet

Bid to obstruct  
tender process

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists hurled four crackers at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) yesterday in a bid to obstruct the selling of tenders schedules.

Witnesses said a group of four JCD workers of Dhaka University's Salimullah Hall, riding two motorbikes, hurled the four crackers at the

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PAKISTAN EARTHQUAKE

Dhaka sends  
relief today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A C-130 cargo aircraft of Bangladesh Airforce leaves Dhaka for Pakistan this morning with relief materials for the earthquake victims.

It is the first consignment from Bangladesh carrying 20,000 pieces of blankets, dry food and antibiotics, Zahurul Haque, a spokesman of the

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| Sehri-Iftar |     |       |       |
|-------------|-----|-------|-------|
| Ramadan     | Oct | Sehri | Iftar |
| 7           | 12  |       | 5-39  |
| 8           | 13  | 4-35  | 5-38  |



Prayer Timing

| October 12 |       |        |
|------------|-------|--------|
|            | Azan  | Jamaat |
| Fajr       | 4-35  | 4-41   |
| Zohr       | 12-45 | 1-15   |
| Asr        | 4-15  | 4-30   |
| Maghrib    | 5-39  | 5-54   |
| Esha       | 7-30  | 8-00   |

Source: Islamic Foundation