

## CA seeks WB help

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Patel said the WB would continue its support to Bangladesh, on a larger scale in the days ahead, according to Secretary-in-charge of Chief Adviser's Office Kazi M Aminul Islam, who was present at the meeting.

Patel appreciated and expressed satisfaction over the caretaker government's performance, outcome and various reforms in a short time, which has been also praised throughout the world.

"The prime objective of the caretaker government is to hold a free, fair and credible election, and the government is carrying out all the activities keeping in mind that the present government is

## Khaleda

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members on condition that her elders would later join them.

But as she suddenly changed her mind, an extortion case was filed against her younger son.

Since the military-backed interim government began cracking down on the graft suspects, including top political leaders, businessmen and bureaucrats, a number of senior leaders started to blame Khaleda for the BNP being in such a mess.

Even when she was confined to her cantonment residence for weeks, very few of the leaders protested the government's restrictions on their chief's movement.

Brigadier General (retired) Hannan Shah, came out to be the only person to speak for Khaleda. He had been informing the media of the developments regarding her condition and the reported government pressure on her to go into exile. But soon he was charged with extortion and arrested, leaving the former premier in the lurch.

Some of the senior leaders, meantime, have gone public with criticism that as the prime minister she was turning a blind eye to the rampant corruption. They suggested curtailing her power to ensure transparency and accountability in the party.

They also criticised Khaleda's unilateral decision to make her brother Sayeed Iskandar a vice-president of the party at a time when reform of the political parties is at the forefront of public attention.

The leaders are pressing for a radical change in the party "for the sake of democracy" even if it means an end to the era of Zia dynasty. They have been relentless in trying to convince the fellow partymen that no meaningful reform is possible with Khaleda at the helm, sources said.

It was learnt that the senior leaders are already thinking about the future of BNP minus Khaleda.

A number of those who had left the party in protest at the politics of dynasty might return to the post-Khaleda BNP, sources said.

A senior BNP leader, who is spearheading the efforts to rid the party of dynastic politics, said once she calls it a day, the top post will be filled by someone capable of commanding respect of the leaders and workers alike.

## Huda, Wadud

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"Charge sheets will be submitted against the four corruption suspects either on Monday or Tuesday," a well-placed source at the ACC told the news agency yesterday.

He said the commission has already approved the submission of charge sheets, but those will be submitted on completion of some more formalities.

A charge sheet will be submitted against Huda and his wife Sigma Huda for allegedly taking Tk 2.40 crore in bribe to facilitate to get a tender. The first information report (FIR) in this regard was filed with Dhanmondi Police Station on March 21.

The ACC is preparing to submit charge sheet against former BNP MP Wadud Bhuiyan for concealing information and acquiring wealth worth Tk 6.3 crore without any known source of income. The FIR was filed with Khagrachari Police Station on March 21.

A charge sheet will be submitted against AL leader Pankaj Debnath for concealing information and acquiring wealth worth Tk 65 lakh without any known source of income. The FIR against him was filed with Dhanmondi Police Station on March 22.

The anti-graft watchdog will submit a charge sheet against T & T CBA President Firoz Miah and his wife Roushan Ara for concealing information and acquiring wealth worth Tk 2 crore. An FIR was filed against them with Ramna Police Station on March 22.

Besides, the ACC is likely to submit charge sheets against four more listed corruption suspects by the end of the next week. They are former minister and AL president member Mohammad Nasim, former state minister and BNP leader Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku and former BNP lawmakers Ali Asgar Lobi and Manjurul Ahsan Munshi.

accountable to the people," Fakhrudin said.

He said, as they want to hold election with a flawless voter list so the Election Commission is working to that end.

Explaining the importance of various sectors for which he sought assistance from the donor agency, Fakhrudin said his government wants to deal with the power sector on a war footing to take it on the fast track as the country's socioeconomic development is dependent on electricity.

On local government, he said strengthening local government was long expectation of all and it needs strengthening administratively and financially to reduce dependence of the local government on the government.

Regarding Padma Bridge, he said it would help in ensuring balanced economic development across the country along with connecting Mongla seaport with many parts of the country.

On agriculture development, the chief adviser said the government is giving much importance to its extension, research, development of technology and developing supply chain to connect growers and consumers. He sought WB's long-term support for this agenda.

The meeting also discussed quick implementation of development projects and disbursement of funds.

The WB will also support capacity building of various ministries for implementing projects, Patel stated.

WB Country Director Xian Zhu, its Operations Adviser Mohammad Althusseyni Toure, ERD Additional Secretary Md Shahidul Huq and Chief Adviser's Deputy Press Secretary Md Sarwar Alam were also present at the meeting.

## CHT land body

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held during the last Awami League government. No meeting of the council were held during the four-party alliance government.

Foreign and CHT Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury chaired the meeting held at the auditorium of CHT affairs ministry. Chairman of CHT Regional Council Jyotiindra Bishnupriya Larma, circle chiefs of Chakma, Bomang and Mong, and chairman and members of Khagrachari, Bandarban and Rangamati district council were present at the meeting.

It is widely believed that the land dispute problem started when the governments of late 70s and early 80s rehabilitated Bangla speaking people from different parts of country on the lands of indigenous communities in CHT.

The peace accord signed between the government and Parbatya Chattagram Jana Shanghat Samity (PCJSS) on December 2, 1997, mentions the formation of Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Commission to resolve land related disputes.

According to the accord, the commission was formed November 1, 2004 headed by a retired judge.

Yesterday's meeting also decided to appoint some staff to facilitate the works of the commission.

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Now the temperature is 7 degrees Celsius higher than this period in last year while the rainfall is 24 per cent less.

"The heat seems unbearable in Dhaka city as it has turned into a city of concrete, losing much of its trees and wetlands. Otherwise, the temperature is not that much for this season. The heat is required for ripening of mangoes and jackfruits," said Dr Anum Nishat of the World Conservation Union.

## 3 killed in 'shootouts'

## STAR REPORT

Three criminals were killed in "crossfire" during "shootouts" between law enforcement and the criminals' accomplices in Dhaka and Kushtiyesterday.

The dead were identified as Mizanur Rahman, 25, Sahidul Islam alias Picture, 25, and Tofazzol Hossain alias Tota, 20.

Sources said a Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) patrol team challenged a group of five to six youths near Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital around 11:15pm. As the gang started shooting at the Rab personnel, Rab retaliated leading to 10-minute gunfight. When the gang finally retreated they left behind the bullet-riddled body of Mizanur Rahman.

Police sources claimed Mizanur has several criminal cases filed against him with Tejgaon Police Station including four murder cases. KUSHITA

Two cadres of the outlawed Gono Mukti Fouj (GMF) were killed in "crossfire" during a "shootout" between police and their cohorts at Milpara in Kushtia early yesterday, our Khusta correspondent reports.

Police sources said following secret information that GMF is holding a secret meeting at Milpara, a team of Khusta police raided the area around 3:30am and managed to close in on them.

They asked them to surrender but the criminals started shooting at the police. Police retaliated that lead to a 30-minute gun battle.

Following the shootout the criminals managed to flee but they left behind the bodies of Picture and Tota on the spot. Police also recovered one locally made gun and seven bullets from the spot.

According to police, Picture was accused in eight criminal cases and convicted in a murder case. He was given the death sentence by a special tribunal. Tota was accused in 10 criminal cases including abduction, rape, robbery and murder.

## Heat wave to turn severe

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's average temperature yesterday rose one degree higher than Wednesday's while meteorologists said the mild to moderate heat wave might turn into a severe one in some parts of Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna and Barisal divisions in the next couple of days.

Yesterday's temperature was 36.6 degrees Celsius in Bogra. The humidity is also high.

Dhaka met office sources said a moderate heat wave is moving over Dhaka and the south-western region of the country.

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