

# Hasina raps intelligence

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She observed that democracy will not be established if the military backed caretaker government works with a plan to bring someone specific or some specific forces to power. "If the government goes around doing its things with preconceived ideas, the people will not get their rights and there will be no accountability," she said.

She also said currently the public attention is being diverted from real issues in the name of reforms.

Brushing aside AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil's recent statement, Hasina questioned if there is any importance of any statement made under detention. "People might say anything under torture, but those statements carry no value at all," she added.

"What kind of intelligence activities are those when the intelligence forces torture people, administer electric shocks on detained persons, and threaten them with arrests of their wives and children?" Hasina asked.

If anyone commits a crime, that person should be punished after being proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law, she said adding, but scaring the accused with prospects of arrests of their family members including their wives and children, is no civilisation. "This is a blatant violation of human rights," she said.

The AL president wanted to know the budget of DGFI and the purposes for which that is being spent. She also questioned whether that budget is for breaking up existing political parties and for launching new ones. "Give the answer," Hasina said adding that playing with the fate of the people 'will not be tolerated'.

"I have asked my party leaders and activists to say whatever the intelligence agency forces them to say, say things even against me if necessary to avoid torture," Hasina said.

The former prime minister said the country has a constitution. "So

everyone must abide by the constitution. Defiance of the constitution did not bring good in the past, and it will not bring good in the future either," she said.

The AL chief claimed the January 11 caretaker government is the outcome of the movement carried out by AL-led grand alliance. And the people now want to see the progress made by the Election Commission in the last six months, she added.

"Who will be in power will be decided by the people," she went on adding that if the people's rights are not ensured then accountability will not be established making way for corruption and criminal activities.

Hasina said her party and the grand alliance led by it forged a movement to give the people back their rights to universal franchise, but it seems that another conspiracy for vote rigging is currently afoot. If that is not true, then why the voter list has not been prepared even after six months have gone, she asked.

Production of transparent ballot boxes have not progressed in the last six months even after the army produced a prototype of that, said the AL chief adding that she wants to see progress in the electoral process including implementation of the electoral reform proposal provided by AL-led 14-party coalition.

About the political reform proposals including party reforms placed by senior leaders of her party, Hasina said party reform have been a continuous process in her party since its inception. According to the rules of AL every leader of the party must place his or her reform proposal in the party's central working committee (ALCWC) meeting, she said adding, if the ALCWC accept any proposal, then that will go to the national council for approval.

Party leaders, activists, and members of the central working committee and the national council will take decisions about the party and the people of the country will

# Wildfires force hundreds to flee

**AP, Reno, Nevada**

An 8,000-acre wildfire forced hundreds of people in the town of Winnemucca to leave their homes, one of more than a dozen blazes that charred a combined 55 square miles in northern Nevada.

The blaze was among a series that dotted the West on Saturday as a heat wave made parched terrain even drier, forcing authorities to evacuate homes and close highways and wilderness areas.

A 100-mile stretch of Interstate 15 in central Utah was closed when a 160,000-acre wildfire jumped the highway, and other fires burned in California, South Dakota, Colorado, Arizona, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

The fire near Winnemucca, about 170 miles east of Reno, threatened up to eight blocks of homes and an electrical substation, said U.S. Bureau of Land Management spokesman Jamie Thompson.

"It's right up to the south edge of town," he said. "The fire definitely poses a danger to parts of the town. It's certainly got everyone's attention."

The largest of the Nevada fires burned 36 square miles, or 23,000 acres, along the Idaho border, said Mike Brown, a spokesman for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. It was 10 percent contained Saturday, officials said. A firefighter was treated at and released from a hospital in Twin Falls, Idaho, with burns.

Another fire blackened 11 square miles, or 7,000 acres, about five miles southwest of Carlin. It burned two

## BNP leaders

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BNP Standing Committee member M Shamsul Islam, party chairperson's adviser ZA Khan, and Joint Secretary General Ashraf Hossain attended the meeting at Mannan Bhuiyan's residence and discussed the party council.

Leaders from Barisal Division came to meet the secretary general to express their solidarity with the reform proposal (announced by Mannan Bhuiyan) and they discussed the party council as its preparation is going on in full swing, said Hafiz Uddin, who is also a former minister.

## Wheel trouble

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informed the control tower about it and asked for advice.

## Inflation dips

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Some local observers say shortage of domestic food production and higher oil prices in the international market are main reasons for the rise in inflation rate.

But the IMF report disagreed with this explanation and said monetary factors and inflation inertia have also played important roles.

It went on saying that broad money growth, private sector credit growth and exchange rate changes too impact on inflation.

"Domestic food production and international oil price change are not shown to have a significant impact," the report said.

The IMF suggested that if the Bangladesh Bank adopts a contractionary monetary policy by tightening broad money or private credit to lower inflation.

However, the central bank officials said contractionary monetary policy would have adverse effect on the country's industrial production.

"We will rather take a balanced monetary policy," observed an official of the bank.

## Biman

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said there are areas where efficiency could be improved. He claimed Biman was systematically destroyed for furthering the interest of vested quarters in the past.

For example, the Biman MD said a trim plate (a small spare part) worth Tk 9,860 was bought at Tk 5,10,000.

On floating Biman's shares, he said no one would buy them at this moment, as it is a "losing business". He, however, said it would not be right to keep Biman's shares in the government hands. He favoured floating Biman's shares as soon as it becomes profitable.

Civil Aviation Secretary Sheikh Altaf Ali said before buying aircraft we would have to identify which types of aircraft is appropriate for Biman.

Farashuddin said after Biman becomes a PLC, the cabinet secretary would be the chairman of Biman's board of directors replacing the civil aviation minister; this would not bring any meaningful changes.

"It would bring no results if Biman is turned into a PLC while 100 percent of its shares are in the government hands," he added.

Termining Biman a goldmine, Abul Barkat said it was turned into a place for thieves during the last 20 years. He also identified corruption as the main problem in Biman and recommended punitive actions against corrupt people working in Biman before it becomes a PLC. He wished all sales agents of Biman were shown the door.

The FBCCI chief said restructuring Biman is urgently needed but if Biman board is not empowered with autonomy, it would bring no benefits to Biman. "If Biman board is controlled like before the situation would remain the same," he said.

## Dhaka-Kolkata

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distance between Sealdah and the Bangladesh border is 120 kilometres while the length of the rail track in Bangladesh territory is 418 kilometres.

A 10-coach train with a capacity of 760 passengers will commute between Dhaka and Sealdah every day. The train will start at 7:45am from Bangladesh and at 7:00am from India.

Bangladeshi crew will man the train up to the border and will return by the Dhaka-bound train from India. Likewise, Indian crew will accompany the passengers from India to the border and go back by the Sealdah-bound train from Dhaka.

The railway sources said that if immigration formalities are carried out at the stations, it would take eight hours to reach Kolkata from Dhaka. However, if the immigration checking is conducted at the border, then travelling time will take no less than 11 hours.

Our Correspondent from Kushita reports: Dr Shawkat Sadi, assistant commissioner of Benapole customs, received the Indian delegation when it arrived at Darshana in Bangladesh territory at 11:07 am yesterday.

Later, the Indian team and the local officials together inspected the arrangements for immigrations and customs at Darshana. The train left for Dhaka at 11:50am.

A large number of people from surrounding areas gathered near the Darshana border check post to welcome the Indian delegation. Tight security measures were taken to check any untoward incident.

## ACC chief

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When approached by reporters on his arrival at the commission after meetings with the chief justice and the attorney general, Mashhud did not talk about it.

When contacted, Attorney General Kamal also told UNB that it was a courtesy call.

But, a highly placed source told the news agency that during the meetings with the chief justice and the attorney general, the ACC chairman spoke of the need of constituting separate benches at the High Court for disposing of the cases relating to the ACC.

## Japanese firm

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to the country's sugar mills in boosting production through providing training to the farmers, distributing high-yielding seeds and offering modern technologies.

He sought cooperation of the Bangladesh government in implementing the projects.

The adviser said the bio-ethanol project could play an important role in developing sugar industries.

Describing the investment proposal of the Japanese firm in sugar industry as a very positive one, the adviser urged Honda to set up urea fertiliser industries in Bangladesh.

Honda Denki has huge investment in sugar turned-bio-ethanol industries and power generation in Cambodia, Brazil and Venezuela.

## Nachole

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Mustafizur Rahman, additional district magistrate of Chapainawabganj, submitted its report yesterday recommending punitive measures against the Nachole Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) whose misconduct triggered the mob violence as well as the ones orchestrated the rampage from behind the scenes.

In its report, the committee said that a number of dishonest fertiliser dealers – especially the ones obtaining controversial appointments during the past four-party alliance government – and a few other individuals for their vested interests were out to smear the image of the present government by creating an artificial fertiliser crisis, said sources.

Law enforcement agencies have made a list of 10 individuals who were found to have ulterior political motives and played roles from behind to instigate violence by the fertiliser-seeking farmers, sources in the law enforcement agencies said.

Shahadat Hossain, deputy commissioner (DC) of Chapainawabganj, told The Daily Star that the probe report will be sent to the ministry concerned for further action.

The health condition of Nachole UNO Manjur Morshed, who received serious head injuries, deteriorated yesterday, said the DC, adding, "He is experiencing partial memory loss and visual impairment."

The UNO has been receiving medical treatment under personal arrangements and was yet to be admitted to a hospital, the DC added.

UNO of Chapainawabganj sadar upazila, Shafikul Islam, has been assigned with additional responsibilities of Nachole upazila.

A number of witnesses as well as government staff told the probe committee that the UNO's misconduct had led to the violence. UNO Manjur Morshed, talking to the probe team, however denied the allegations.

A government official said, "Aus cultivation period is already over. Farmers now are collecting urea for the upcoming Aman season and for other uses. The stock of urea is sufficient...so there should not be any crisis...."

There are many reasons why the demand for urea always runs so high. One of the reasons is, affluent farmers tend to stock up on urea for future cultivation. Besides, it is profitable to smuggle it to Myanmar or to sell it on the black market where a 50kg sack of urea is sold at Tk 400 to Tk 500 over the rate fixed by the government, the official explained.

# String of attacks kill 26 in Baghdad

**AP, Baghdad**

A flurry of bombings in Baghdad killed 26 people yesterday, and officials said the death toll from a giant suicide truck blast that devastated the market of a Shia town north of the capital a day earlier could be more than 130.

Officials earlier had said Saturday's bombing in the town of Armili killed 115 people, one of the deadliest attacks in Iraq in months. The blast suggested Sunni insurgents are moving further north to strike in less protected regions beyond the US security crackdown in Baghdad and on the capital's northern doorstep.

The string of attacks Sunday morning in Baghdad made clear that extremists can still unleash organized strikes in the capital despite a relative lull in violence there in past weeks amid the US offensives.

Two car bombs detonated nearly simultaneously in Baghdad's mostly Shia Karrada district, killing eight people. The first hit at 10:30 a.m., near a closed restaurant, destroying stalls and soft drink stands. Two passers-by were killed and eight wounded, a police official said.

The area is near the offices of the Supreme Islamic Council in Iraq, the biggest Shia party in parliament, and is believed to be among the most protected parts of the city.

About five minutes later, the second car exploded about a mile away, hitting shops selling leather jackets and shoes. Six people were killed and seven wounded, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

On Baghdad's southwestern outskirts, a bomb hit a truckload of newly recruited Iraqi soldiers being brought into the capital to join the crackdown, killing 15 soldiers and wounding 20, a police official at the nearest police station said, also speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to release the information.

Also, a bomb hidden under a car went off at the entrance of Shorja market a central Baghdad market that has been hit repeatedly by insurgents killing three civilians and wounding five, police said.

The US military announced that an American soldier was killed in combat a day earlier in Salahuddin province. It did not provide details.

Armili residents on Sunday buried about 70 of the dead from the truck bombing the previous morning. Mourners flowed into mosques and funeral tents set up in the town's main street, where black banners were hung on the walls with names of the dead.

Iraqi army and police forces were out in increased numbers in the streets and closed off entrances to the town to prevent attacks on the funerals a frequent target of Sunni insurgents, said Brig. Abbas Mohammed Amin, chief of police in the nearby city of Tuz Khurmat.

The toll from the attack in the farming town of 26,000 mostly Shias from Iraq's ethnic Turkman minority was still not clear. Abdullah Jabara, deputy governor of Salahuddin province where the town is located, said Saturday the toll from the blast was 115 dead nearly three-quarters of them

women, children and elderly.

On Sunday, Amin put the toll at 150 dead, while Abbas al-Bayati, a Shia Turkman lawmaker, told reporters 130 had been killed.

The count was difficult because of the town's remote location and because many of the dead initially had been buried under rubble that took hours to clear. Saturday's blast ripped through the town market during crowded morning shopping, destroying dozens of old mud-brick homes and shops.

Al-Bayati sharply criticized the security situation in the town, saying its police force had only 30 members and that the Interior Ministry had finally responded to requests for more two days before the attack. He said authorities should help residents "arm themselves" to protect them if the security forces cannot.

He said an Iraqi army battalion was moved out of the Armili region to Baghdad earlier this year to help in the crackdown in the capital. Defence Ministry spokesman Maj Gen Mohammed al-Askari denied that, saying the army's 4th Division was in the area.

Armili residents say regions like theirs are being left exposed and vulnerable. Tensions are constantly high between the town's Shia Turkman population and the Sunni Arabs who dominate the surrounding villages. Iraqi security presence is scant in the remote region, far from Salahuddin's administrative centre and the eye of officials.

"The number of Iraqi police and army in this area is too low. This is a farming area with a lot of empty areas, so it's neglected. There's not even much presence of government officials," said Haytham Khalaf, 37, an Amirli resident whose niece was injured. He accused local Sunnis of helping al-Qaeda set up a presence there.

US forces are waging an offensive in the city of Baqouba, just north of Baghdad, to uproot al-Qaeda militants and Sunni insurgents using the region to launch attacks in the capital. But American commanders acknowledged that many extremists fled Baqouba before the sweep began in mid-June.

Al-Bayati said Sunni insurgents had fled to the Himrin region, a swathe of mountains southeast of Amiri, between it and Baqouba.

The top US commander in Iraq, Gen David Petraeus, told The Associated Press on Saturday he expected Sunni extremists to try to "pull off a variety of sensational attacks and grab the headlines to create a 'mini-Tet.'"

He was referring to the 1968 Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Tet offensive that undermined public support for the Vietnam War in the United States.

## VIP prisoners

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around which there are no high-rise buildings. The authorities would acquire government structures or rent any non-government house if it meets the requirements, sources said.

The decision was taken as the VIP prisoners once accustomed to luxurious lifestyle are falling ill in jails and the authorities have been struggling to cope with the situation, the jail authorities said.

# Attack on UK envoy

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Ministry of Home Affairs Abdul Karim chaired the meeting which was held at the ministry's conference room.

In a press briefing following the meeting, the home secretary said charge sheets of the murder case and the case filed under Explosive Substances Act, in connection with the grenade attack at Hazrat Shahjalal (RA) Shrine in Sylhet in 2004, have already been submitted to a court.

Banned militant outfit Harkatul Jihad al Islami chief Mufti Abdul Hannan, his brother Mofizur Rahman, and two other militants Delwar Hossain Ripon and Sharif Shahedul Alam alias Bipul are the charge-sheeted accused in both the cases.

Anwar Choudhury along with 70 others were hurt while three others killed in the grenade attack at the shrine of Hazrat Shahjalal (RA) in Sylhet after Juma prayers on May 21, 2004.

The monitoring cell meeting reviewed the progress of 10 sensational cases which were included in a list. The alleged murder case of Action Aid Country Director Nasreen Pervin Huq topped the list.

The meeting was told that the prime suspect of the case--Nasreen's driver Zakir Hossain--is now on bail. Besides, the investigator did not find any other links or conspiracies behind her death. The meeting was also told that her death was accidental, sources said.

The other cases the cell is monitoring are: the case filed in connection with inducing Rina Bala to commit suicide at Shyampur in the capital in May 2005, killing an army officer's son Arifur Rahman Rusho at Dhanmondi in May this year, the

**AP, Jakarta**

Poisonous fumes from an Indonesian volcano killed six teenagers who were camping on the mountain, a doctor said Sunday.

Indonesia has more active volcanoes than any other nation and climbing them when they are not especially active is a popular past-time. Salak, where the teens died Saturday, is just south of the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, and is one of the country's most popular peaks.

Jusuf Fauzan, a doctor at a hospital in the nearby town of Bogor, said families of the victims had refused autopsies, but the dead were believed to have been poisoned by gases from one of two craters on the volcano. The six were found with blood and foam on their mouths and noses, he said.

The victims, between 14 and 16 years old, were among about 50 students spending the weekend on the mountain, media reports said. Their bodies were evacuated from the 7,152 feet peak on Sunday.

# ACC to quiz ex-minister Salahuddin at jail gate

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) will interrogate detained former state minister for communications Salahuddin Ahmed at Dhaka Central Jail in connection with a case filed for taking Tk 1 crore in bribe from a businessman.

The bribery case was filed against him with Shahbagh Police Station on May 29.

ACC Assistant Director Ashrafur Islam, also the investigation officer of the case, submitted a petition before Metropolitan Magistrate Jagannath Das Khokon to interrogate detained Salahuddin at the jail gate.

In his forwarding report, the IO said Salahuddin was directly involved in taking bribe from the businessman and he [Salahuddin] needs to be quizzed at the jail gate to gather details on the act of bribery.

Following the petition, the magistrate allowed the ACC to interrogate Salahuddin on the jail premises.

# Singer Sabina

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non-Hodgkin lymphoma, a form of blood cancer.

Sabina was admitted to hospital in mid-June and went through tests and operation by specialised doctors led by Dr Khademul Islam and was diagnosed with the deadly disease.

At present she is undergoing treatment under Dr Lt Col (ret'd) Mofazzal Hossain.

Talking about Sabina's latest condition, Labaid Hospital Registrar Dr Mohammad Ezharul Haque Kaiser yesterday said they could not give chemotherapy because of derangement of her liver function.

"We examined her again on Saturday, but it showed that her liver was not fit for chemotherapy. So, we held it up and gave immunotherapy," he said, adding that they will continuously monitor the level of her liver function until she is fit for chemotherapy.

On the condition of Sabina's lever, he said it seemed to be improving but not yet up to the level when chemotherapy can be administered.

Asked on the possibility of cure, the doctor said, "If the response of chemotherapy is good, we are optimistic about her cure."

The board formed for the treatment of the noted singer proposed taking her abroad, but Sabina and her family members preferred that she be treated in the country, Dr Kaiser noted.

Sabina Yasmin started her career through playback and sing-

ing for the radio and gramophone companies when she was still a child. As she grew up, she reigned supreme in the country's music industry for more than the last three decades.

Equally proficient in modern and folk songs, Sabina has won the hearts of millions of people all over the world. As a member of national cultural delegations she has performed in China, Japan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, India, the UAE, Uzbekistan, Greece, Germany, Sweden, Norway and the UK. She has also made numerous concert tours in the USA, Canada, Italy, France, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Pakistan and Australia.

Sabina Yasmin has won all the national awards including the highest Swadhinata Padak, the Ekushey Padak and the national film award. In India, the Bengal Film Journalists' Association has also honoured Sabina with its Best Playback Singer Award.

With the news of Sabina's illness spreading out, politicians, cultural activists, relatives and fans and well-wishers have been rushing to the hospital to inquire about her health.

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina and AL leader Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, noted singers Andrew Kishore and Shakila Zafar and television personality Hanif Sangket, among others, visited Sabina yesterday.