

# Hasina, Khaleda

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sources added.

Examining the information and documents, the sources in the ACC said they believe inconsistencies might be found in the statements to be submitted by the two former prime ministers.

According to the ACC rules a person will be punished with a maximum of ten years imprisonment, if that person is found guilty of suppressing information in the wealth statement.

Meanwhile, the ACC is preparing to file more corruption cases against the two top leaders as the intelligence agencies already sent some documents to the commission for taking such actions, the sources said.

Besides, the ACC is looking into the possibility of reviving the unresolved cases filed with the now defunct Bureau of Anti-corruption against the two former premiers.

Both the top leaders, who are already under tremendous pressure within and outside their parties to retire from politics, will face increased difficulties if they have to deal with the ACC's new initiatives.

Hasina, who is now in a sub-jail and already sued in three extortion cases during the army backed caretaker government's regime, might face additional difficulties in preparing her wealth statement for possible lack of proper counsel.

On the other hand, although BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has not been detained yet, she is virtually confined to her residence and isolated.

Neither the government nor any individual has yet filed any case against Khaleda Zia during the caretaker government's regime. But the sources said corruption cases might be filed

## AL faces

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But now when she is in jail for the first time on a specific criminal charge, the leaders and workers are not sure what to do as they find themselves in an uncharted situation both in and outside the organisation.

Hasina sought to step down as the party chief following the 1991 election debacle, but was forced to backtrack in the face of a huge pressure from leaders and workers at all levels.

This time she faces the possibility of being disqualified from contesting the next parliamentary election. The AL will have to do without her in the election next year if she ends up being convicted under the emergency rules.

## 12 AL women

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Emergency Power Rules.

Police chased the protesters and lobbed teargas shells. They also arrested four JML activists from the scene.

The arrested JML activists--Parul Akter, Kona Biswas, Nasima Ahmed and Lovely Sultana--were yesterday produced in a Dhaka court that sent them to jail.

## Rajuk CBA leader

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They lodged a case with Motijheel Police Station accusing three including Rajuk CBA President Amir Khashru and Abdul Haque. Khashru is absconding.

Joint forces would interrogate the arrestee intensively after taking him on remand.

The official also said they recovered the three rooms used as CBA office and handed those over to the Rajuk authorities.

## Woman SC lawyer

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The victim's eight-year-old daughter Ayman Jara Tofa, a class III student of Scholar School and College in Dhanmondi, was asleep during the killing. Her husband, a retired PWD engineer, and son Ali Sayem Rumman, a doctor of Central Hospital, were outside the house.

Mina told the police she opened the door hearing doorbell and saw a tall youth aged around 26 who looked for Sayma.

"Madam came and seeing the youth uttered, 'Oh you, come in please,' Mina told journalists. "They were having a conversation in the drawing room and I returned to kitchen."

A few minutes later Aleya found the youth washing blood of his hand. Both of them also saw the youth searching Sayma's bedroom.

Mina and Aleya told the police they realised Sayma was killed but did not raise an alarm fearing the same consequence. They informed the matter to relatives and neighbours when the killer disappeared.

Sayma's brother Mozammel Haq Khan told The Daily Star he received a call from a relative, who informed him that Sayma's house was being robbed off. He called Sayma who in feeble tone said, "Save me brother, I'm being killed." Then someone disconnected the phone.

The murderer took away three mobile sets including two of the victim.

against her too.

The two leaders may submit their statements through their representatives, as the law does not make their physical presence mandatory for submitting the statements.

Subject to valid reasons, the ACC may extend the time limit for the submissions by an additional seven working days if the two former premiers fail to submit their statements within the stipulated first seven days.

## Cop, informant

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Earlier, the prosecution and the defence had completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 13 prosecution witnesses.

According to the prosecution, SI Hashem arrested Bibhash Chandra Sarker, younger brother of the complainant, and asked his mother Manzila Rani Sarker to meet him at about 10:30am on March 2.

Manzila went to the police station the next day where Hashem demanded Tk 50,000 as extortion and said if she refuses to oblige her son will be implicated in a dozen cases.

And if she gives the demanded money her son will be implicated under section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code, Hashem told Manzila.

The complainant said he along with five others went to Uttara in the city at about 10:05am on March 3 to give the money.

Detective Branch police caught Shafiqul red-handed from the spot when he reached there and received the money from the complainant. The plaintiff gave him Tk 5,000 instead of Tk 50,000.

Following information from the arrestee, police arrested SI Hashem and an extortion case was filed with Uttara police under Speedy Trial (Law and Order Disruption) Act against them the following day.

## Anxious wait

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request of Keerthi Senanayake, chief patron of Madampe Senanayake Aramaya.

Several strands of the sacred hair, kept under tight security in Chittagong, had earlier been donated to Thailand and Japan for veneration by the Buddhists of those countries.

According to Ajit Ranjan Barua, president of Bangladesh Buddhist Association, a Tibetan monk brought the hair of Buddha, who lived more than 2,550 years ago in Nepal and India, to Bangladesh in the 1930s.

An official of the foreign ministry said Dhaka would hand over the relic of Gautam Buddha's hair as a gift to Colombo and as a gesture of friendship and goodwill. "There is a strong relationship between the two countries' Buddhist communities, and Bangladeshi monks go to Sri Lanka for higher education," he added.

The sacred relic would officially be handed over to the visiting Sri Lankan foreign minister at a simple ceremony and he will return to Colombo with the hair relic tomorrow. His return with the Buddha's hair coincide with the Sri Lanka government's plans to celebrate the Thoppigala victory in the East.

The road leading to Colombo from Katunayake has already been decorated and religious observances and pujas will be held at the Gangaramaya Temple in Colombo where the relic would be on display round the clock for the public on July 19, 20 and 21. The display could be extended to July 22 if the number of devotees rises.

President of Sri Lanka Mahinda Rajapaksa and Mrs Rajapaksa are scheduled to pay homage to the sacred hair Thursday afternoon. The sacred relic will be taken to the Senanayake Aramaya in Madampe in a religious procession from Gangaramaya. The Senanayake Aramaya had received relics of Buddha from Chittagong and Takshila in 1956 and 1960.

Sri Lankan government has taken steps to provide necessary facilities including transport, security and utility services for the devotees who wish to pay homage to the relic.

According to scholars, ancient Buddhist scriptures record that two Indian traders were given a lock of Buddha's hair when they earnestly requested for it. They have been identified as Thapassu and Bhalluka. According to an ancient Pali text, Jathakatta Katha, the two received the lock of hair seven weeks after the ascetic Siddhartha Gauthama attained Buddhahood.

A pali stone inscription at Girihadu Seya in an eastern province of Sri Lanka states that Thapassu and Bhalluka enshrined the hair at Girihadu Seya, which would place Buddhism in Sri Lanka well before Indian kings introduced the religion to the region.

Some religious scholars contend that the lock of hair was carried to Girihadu Seya by descendants of Thapassu and Bhalluka. Ancient texts show that traders, as well as kings, were instrumental in the spread of Buddhism.

## UK asks govt

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government to follow due process to the letter and make sure every assistance is given to Sheikh Hasina within the process," he told journalists after attending a luncheon arranged by Foreign Adviser Iftekhar A Chowdhury for the visiting Sri Lankan ministerial delegation at a state guest house.

Asked whether Hasina's arrest would affect the crackdown on corruption or create a political crisis, the envoy said, "This government is treating it as simply a law and crime issue. They should follow due process, and what most people ask for is to make sure that no laws are broken to protect interests."

He went on, "We expect Sheikh Hasina issue will be resolved quickly with due legal process ... What is important here is that if anybody is arrested, evidence and due process are to be followed."

He declined to make any comment when asked whether he feels that the AL chief has been arrested as part of the 'minus-two' theory, saying it is a matter for the people and government of Bangladesh.

"Whatever is done must be done through a legal framework, for a better Bangladesh, an outstanding election and a better democracy. After all, that is what the caretaker government said it stands for."

The envoy said, "This (arrest of Hasina) is a significant event given this is a former prime minister and these are also serious charges."

"We see the government is very keen to arrest the state of corruption. I'm sure that is part of that drive. The government has been very consistent with stated principles during the past six months. We expect the Sheikh Hasina issue will resolve quickly with due legal process."

Welcoming the election roadmap announced by the Election Commission and 'reconfirmation of the election date', he said they have noticed that the roadmap allows the elections to be held earlier than November or December if the voter list is completed earlier than expected.

The high commissioner hoped that preparing the voter list does not take longer than necessary and that Britain would assist Bangladesh in holding free, fair and credible elections at the earliest.

## Protests pour

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Kabir Chowdhury, Hena Das, Kalim Sharafi, Prof Muhammad Jafar Iqbal and 41 other eminent personalities also signed the statement.

Col (ret'd) Shawkat Ali, Dr Alauddin Ahmed, Hemayet Uddin Birprotik and 20 others under the banner of Muktiyoddha Oikya Parishad demanded immediate release of Hasina.

Meanwhile, 75 lawyers of Rajshahi court in a statement protested the arrest of AL chief Hasina and demanded her release.

Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote, Bangladesh Krishak League, Bangladesh Awami Jubo Ainjibi Parishad, Bangladesh Islami Oikya Jote, Sammilito Sangskritik Jote of Rajshahi district unit, Muktiyoddha Phathagar, Joy Bangla Sangskritik Jote, Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad also criticised Hasina's arrest through separate statements.

Our correspondents in Rajshahi, Gazipur and Thakurgaon said AL and its front organisations brought out processions in those districts yesterday. They chanted slogans against the government and demanded immediate release of Hasina.

A group of Jubo League activists Monday night vandalised vehicles on Dhaka-Rajshahi Highway in front of Natore NS Government College in protest against the arrest of Hasina.

Meanwhile, AL Mymensingh district unit condemned the arrest of Hasina. In a statement, its president former AL lawyer Matiur Rahman and secretary Abdul Matin protested the arrest of Hasina and demanded her immediate release.

In a separate statement, vice-presidents of district AL Mujibur Rahman Milki and Nazim Uddin Ahmed also demanded the release of Hasina in the greater interest of the country.

## CEC plays

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political parties on electoral reforms, the CEC said Hasina's arrest would not have any impact on it.

He said the EC would sit with the parties in September and hoped the current situation would take a favourable turn by then.

"We also have to keep in mind that we will exchange views with the party, not with any person. It is not the election commission's headache who remain in charge of the parties," said the CEC.

He said preparation of the voter list in Rajshahi might be started at the end of this month or at the beginning of next month.

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed will inaugurate the event.

Two commissioners, Muhammad Sohul Hussain and M Sakhawat Hossain, would visit Rajshahi on Sunday prior to the chief adviser's visit to oversee the process.

# Talks next month

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ministers for collecting a relic of Gautam Buddha's hair from a Buddhist temple in Chittagong, also met Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed earlier yesterday.

Fakhruddin asked the Sri Lankan delegation to invest in Bangladesh, especially in the jute sector, as the government opened up jute mills to foreign investors, reported UNB.

The delegation will fly to Chittagong this morning, where the foreign adviser will officially hand over the relic of Buddha's hair to his counterpart in a ceremony later today.

Religious Affairs and Moral Upliftment Minister of Sri Lanka Pandu Bandaranaike, Trade Minister Bandula Gunawardena, and the Chief Priest of that country visited the International Buddhist Monastery in Dhaka.

Meanwhile, in a joint news briefing after the bilateral talks, Iftekhar told the media that Dhaka and Colombo will activate all bilateral mechanisms, starting with a Bangladeshi trade delegation who will visit Sri Lanka soon to boost export to the island nation.

Bogollagama told reporters that Colombo is also keen on Bangladesh's emerging banking and financial sectors as well as strengthening the existing links in the apparel industry.

Bangladesh exported around \$13 million worth of goods to Sri Lanka in the FY 05-06, and imported goods of around \$11 million in the same period, according to official figures.

Bogollagama also met the Sri Lanka Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce (SBCCI) at Hotel Sonargaon in the capital, where he said the trade volume 'means nothing' to him, rather the two sides should minimise all trade related difficulties.

He said Bangladesh can export cement to Sri Lanka, as the latter is annually producing only 2.7 million tons of cement against its demand for 3.5 million tons per year.

In reply to a query, the Lankan foreign minister also said Bangladesh

## Student strike

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out the explosions.

Apart from this, the strike was observed in a lacklustre way at the DU as most of the classes and examinations were held on schedule. However, the presence of the students was comparatively low.

Additional members of the law enforcement agencies were deployed on the campus and at the entrances to the university.

Academic activities of most of the schools and colleges in the capital were normal, sources said.

Our RU correspondent reported that students' presence was very thin and the employees attended the office late.

Classes and examinations were held duly and university buses ran as usual.

The strike was partially observed in Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology, Rajshahi Government College, Polytechnic Institute, Rajshahi City College and other major educational institutes of the city.

Meanwhile, our Kusthia correspondent reported that no classes or examinations were held at the Islamic University.

BCL activists barred university buses to ply the Kusthia-Jhenidah road. However, some buses reached the campus under police escort.

BCL men tried to bring out a protest procession but failed, as the police and the Rapid Action Battalion dispersed them.

# Akbar Ali

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higher authorities decide to adjust the money, former adviser to the caretaker government Akbar Ali Khan said.

"It appears to be an interim order and so should be subject to a review by higher authorities. It's quite difficult to say what will be the final decision in this regard," he said referring to the speaker's taking out his own medical bill.

In an interview with The Daily Star, Dr Akbar Ali, also a former cabinet secretary, said the prime minister, in the current context the chief adviser, can give a decision here under the Special Medical Attendance Rules, 1950 or the Jatiya Sangsad (JS) Secretariat Commission can do it under its general authority.

"If the decision does not go in favour of adjusting the said amount, the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office can ask him [the speaker] to refund the money," he added.

The Daily Star on last Thursdays carried a news story on Sircar's drawing Tk 28 lakh as medical bill ignoring official objections. The same day, the speaker at a press conference protested the news and claimed whatever he has done was lawful and in good faith.

Asked if the speaker himself can approve an amount for his own expenditure, the former adviser said the sanctioning of the money flouted the General Financial Rules that say, "No authority should exercise its powers for sanctioning expenditure to pass an order that will be directly or indirectly to its own advantage."

"We must remember that the speaker's privileges act does not provide for any such facilities. This is subject to public servants rules and in this case, permission from the prime minister was needed," he said.

"If we go by the precedents, former speaker late Humayun

businesses should engage further with the Sri Lankan commerce ministry to receive long-term visa facilities.

Iftekhar said Sri Lanka expressed a keen interest in pharmaceuticals, leather goods, cement, and potatoes among other commodities.

He added that civil aviation delegates from both sides will sit at the earliest to re-establish direct air links that were severed in 2002. While, Bogollagama agreed that both sides should sit to ensure that the two countries are connected 'as fast as possible'.

The two sides also plan to meet to discuss direct shipping links and are looking to take steps to reduce shipping costs between Chittagong and Colombo, he said.

Bangladesh foreign ministry sources said Colombo has been demanding greater 'freedom rights' for their flights to Dhaka, an issue that offers itself for quick resolution.

Asked whether Sri Lanka is interested in signing a Free Trade Agreement with Bangladesh, Bogollagama said at this stage they are looking to further cooperate on economic matters to generate higher bilateral trade to reach a point where both economies are ready to graduate to an FTA.

Bogollagama also expressed his gratitude for Bangladesh's donation of the relic of Gautam Buddha's hair, which he said will be a lasting monument of the friendship between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

The Lankan foreign minister also stressed the need for the two sides to boost intra-regional trade in South Asia. He also said the two sides looked at greater cooperation in BIMSTEC.

He also quoted the chief adviser to say that Fakhruddin condemned terrorism in all its forms and will look to cooperate with Colombo to eliminate terrorism from the region.

## ACC to quiz

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March 7 and later shown arrested under section 16(2) of the Emergency Power Ordinance 2007.

He was earlier placed on remand on different terms in connection with a GD filed with Tejgaon Police Station.

MAMUN'S GRAFT CASE  
ACC Assistant Director Tahsinul Haq, who is also the IO of the graft case, yesterday submitted a 15-day remand petition to interrogate Mamun.

The court, however, fixed today (Wednesday) for hearing on the remand prayer in Mamun's presence.

On May 8, Assistant Director of the ACC, Mohammad Ibrahim filed a graft case against Mamun and his wife Shahina Yasmin.

In the First Information Report (FIR) of the case filed against Mamun and his wife with Cantonment Police Station, the complainant said Mamun with the connivance of his wife illegally amassed movable and immovable properties worth over Tk 62.21 crore.

The case was filed under Section 27 (1) of the ACC Act 2004, Section 109 of the Penal Code and Section 15 (Gha) (5) of the Emergency Power Rules 2007.

### CASE AGAINST HUDA

The hearing on the seven-day prayer to interrogate Huda in connection with a Tk 1-crore extortion case was not held yesterday, as he was not produced before the court. The court fixed July 22 for hearing.

## BNP reformists

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positive response from them," he said.

Rehana Akhter Ranu, another former lawmaker of the party, however opposed holding of the council in the absence of Khaleda. "Those who will try to hold the council in the absence of the chairperson will be identified as traitors," she said.

Rehana also rejected the possibility of Khaleda being arrested. "There is no reason to arrest madam [Khaleda] as there is no case against her," she said.

## Hasina

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newspapers. He said doctors will check her health regularly.

She was given an egg, bread and vegetables for breakfast, rice, chicken, vegetables and dal (pulses) for lunch, and rice, fish, vegetables and dal for dinner yesterday.

Haider said he is personally looking after the arrangements for her.

He said Hasina was given four newspapers and the jail weekly "Kara Barta". But sources said the former prime minister was not happy with the supplied newspapers and asked for the leading dailies.

A total of 20 jail police, including five female police, under the supervision of Deputy Jailor Faruk Ahmed have been posted at the special jail. Members of the Rapid Action Battalion and police personnel have also been deployed around the sub-jail.

Hasina's husband and nuclear scientist Dr Wajed Miah, who fell ill following her arrest, has been undergoing treatment at Labaid Hospital. AL leader Motia Chowdhury and others visited Wajed yesterday.

## Gupta Era relics

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include a decorated two-part wooden door from the 18th century recovered long ago from Belhama village in Joypurhat.

A former custodian of the museum said, "We need modern lighting facilities to display the exceptional decoration of this wooden door properly but it has been kept in a dark corner of the museum."

Dr Shafiqul Alam, director of the Archaeology Department, told The Daily Star over cellphone that a project proposal for establishing a modern museum at Mahasthangarh was submitted to the ministry concerned long ago. The proposal that also includes development work of infrastructures of the department at Mahasthangarh Archaeological Site is yet to be approved.

## Political party

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achieve democracy. Rather, we got elective dictatorship," he lamented.

Mujahidul Islam Selim, leader of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), in reply to a query over the reason of CPB and Jamaat-e-Islami being kept out of the purview of the reform, said that CPB has also been going through reforms.

Rashed Khan Menon, president of Workers Party of Bangladesh, observed that the reforms would ultimately establish 'controlled' democracy and split the major political parties. He emphatically said the people of Bangladesh would not welcome any controlled situation.

"Who gave Mainul Hossain the duty to establish 'honest' politics?" Menon questioned.

Meanwhile, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) president Hasanul Haque Inu said prior to any reform, a national consensus should be reached on the issues of black money, muscle power and war crimes.

Mahmudur Rahman Manna, organising secretary of Bangladesh Awami League (AL), said immediate release of party chief Sheikh Hasina is a must for any true reform to take place in the party.

"We had been talking about reforms for quite some time before the interim government put a ban on indoor politics. If the parties adopt imposed reforms, they might end up with no [fruitful] outcome. Keeping the president [of AL] in jail, how would you ensure reforms? To whom will we submit our demands?" Manna said.

Dr Ataur Rahman, chairman of Centre for Governance Studies, however observed that after some sort of controlling, democracy might prevail. "It is not unusual.... in the past, things were done the other way around in major political parties -- powers were concentrated in dynastic leaderships... this needs to be corrected."

Azizur Rahman, executive director of CGS, former ministers Dr Mizanur Rahman Shelly, Chowdhury Kamal Ibn Yusuf, Sheikh Shahidul Islam, ASM Abdur Rab, Syeda Razia Foyez, Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Kazi Firuz Rashid, former members of parliament GM Quader, Zahuruddin Swapan, former state minister Ebadur Rahman Chowdhury and Maj (ret'd) Akhtaruzzaman also took part in the discussion.

# 40 killed in Iraq

FROM PAGE 16  
provincial capital of Baquba.

But as US and Iraqi forces have pushed through the city militants appear to have fled to more outlying areas, carrying out a blistering series of attacks on remote towns and villages.

On July 7, a suicide truck bomb in the village of Emerli just north of the province killed more than 150 people and wounded hundreds in one of the deadliest attacks since the start of the Iraq war in 2003.

Meanwhile, a suicide bomber blew up his car next to an Iraqi army patrol in Baghdad on Tuesday, killing at least seven people, a medic and a security official said.

The attack took place in Zayuna, an upscale residential area in the centre of the capital.

"We received seven bodies of people killed in the attack and admitted eight wounded victims," said a medic at the city's Ibn Nafis hospital.

A security official said three of the dead were Iraqi soldiers.

Earlier another car bomb exploded on Tuesday in a parking lot near the Iranian embassy in Baghdad, killing at least four people, security officials said.

Another two people were wounded in the attack, Brigadier General Qassim Atta, the spokesman for a four-month-old Baghdad security plan, told Iraqi state-run television.

The vehicle exploded at around 11:00 am (0700 GMT) in the car park which is often used by people visiting Tehran's mission in the Iraqi capital.

The blast rattled windows in surrounding buildings and cloaked the unpaved parking lot in a pall of grey smoke, leaving at least one vehicle engulfed in flames, an AFP correspondent on the scene said.

The parking area near the Iranian embassy has been targeted before. In April two car bombs

exploded there without causing heavy casualties.

On Tuesday dozens of men collected the charred bodies of their relatives from local morgues as grief-stricken women beat their chests and collected the victims' belongings.

Kirkuk residents said the carnage, which wounded 185 people, was aimed at splitting the city and triggering ethnic and sectarian bloodshed.

"The explosions are meant to incite sectarianism among the people of Kirkuk," said Sunni tribesman Sheikh Ismail al-Hadidi.

The city's streets were deserted on Tuesday as pedestrians stayed indoors and most shopkeepers downed their shutters, an AFP reporter said.

Kirkuk's policemen also appeared shattered by the blasts.

"Yesterday's catastrophe was unprecedented. The charred and mutilated bodies stunned us. We are human beings, after all," said policeman Aras Ghafour.

"What should we do when a bomber wants to kill himself and innocent people? The challenge is big and the situation is serious."

Ethnic Kurdish leaders want to absorb Kirkuk into their autonomous northern region despite stiff opposition from the city's Arab and Turkmen residents.

Tensions have heightened in recent months ahead of a possible referendum by the end of the year to decide the city's fate.

## AL activist dies

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Habullah, 45, son of Nitai Chandra Das, was listening to radio at a grocery at Shakil roundabout. As the news of Hasina's arrest was aired, he fell on the ground and died on the spot.

Local AL leaders expressed condolence to the bereaved family.

# UK orders expulsion

FROM PAGE 16  
43-year-old accused Putin of being behind his killing.

British prosecutors have named Russian businessman and former KGB agent Andrei Lugovoi as the chief suspect. Litvinenko said he first fell ill after meeting Lugovoi and business partner Dmitry Kovtun at a London hotel.

But Russia has refused to extradite Lugovoi, saying its constitution prevents that.

Brown, speaking in Berlin, said, "I have no apologies for the action that we have taken, but I do want a resolution of this issue as soon as possible."

"When a murder takes place, when a number of innocent civilians were put at risk ... when an independent prosecuting authority makes it absolutely clear what is in the interest of justice and there is no forthcoming cooperation, then action has to be taken," the British leader said.

Foreign Secretary David Miliband told lawmakers in the House of Commons that "the Russian government has failed to register either how seriously we treat this case or the seriousness of the issues involved, despite lobbying at the highest level and clear explanations of our need for a satisfactory response."