

Moeen calls for concerted efforts to build nation

UNB, Noakhali

Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed yesterday called for a national unity to build Bangladesh as a prosperous nation.

"Now our responsibility is to build a sovereign and prosperous Bangladesh through concerted efforts," he said while laying the foundation stone of Bir Srestha Shaheed Ruhul Amin Library and Memorial Museum at Bagpanchra village in Sonaimuri upazila in the afternoon.

Speaking at a civic gathering at a local school ground on the occasion, the army chief said the freedom fighters had joined the war

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Move to extend proposed road to Myanmar up to China

Deal with Yangon likely next week

ASHFAQ WARES KHAN

Dhaka, during Myanmar Deputy Foreign Minister U Kyaw Thu's visit next week, will push Myanmar to consider jointly approaching China to sponsor a feasibility study for extending the proposed Bangladesh-Myanmar road link-up to the Chinese city of Kunming.

A deal may be signed in this regard during a possible visit later next week of the Myanmar Construction Minister Maj Gen Saw Tun, which would kick-start

further connectivity agreements including the establishment of direct air-links.

The new 23km road linking Bangladesh and Myanmar will connect Gundhum in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh and Bolibazar, Myanmar.

Bangladesh will also ask Myanmar to import more products including pharmaceuticals, livestock and food items.

An expansion of Bangladesh-Myanmar trade would also see a quick agreement on "Avoidance of

Double Taxation," a draft of which has already been finalised but would not be signed during this trip, said a highly-placed source in the foreign ministry.

Yangon, replaced in 2005 by the new capital Naypyidaw, holds special links with Dhaka, as Myanmar is the only other country, apart from India, to share land boundary with Bangladesh.

Myanmar will also be approached to take up Bangladesh's case to link up with

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Begum's six decades in awakening women

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The editor and contributors of Begum yesterday reminisced about the 60th anniversary of the country's first weekly magazine that was especially designed for women.

Keeping intact its distinctly suave tone, the magazine played an important role to awaken the women of the country and helped them to come out from the thralldom of religious fundamentalism, conservatism and superstitions, said the speakers at a discussion at the Mahila Samity auditorium in the capital.

"The Begum tried to gradually break the barricades that held back

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Litterateur Rabeya Khatun, flanked by Selina Hossain, right, Nurjahan Begum and Selina Doza Panni, speaks at a discussion marking 60th year of women's weekly Begum held at Mohila Samity auditorium in the capital yesterday.

Rejoinder, our reply

Power Development Board (PDB) issued a rejoinder to The Daily Star news headlined "Faulty power plant to restart without power up system" published on July 10.

The PDB said it was not clear what the newspaper meant by "faulty power plant" because the plant has one emergency diesel generator in good condition at Haripur power station.

Provision was kept for a new diesel generating set for starting gas booster compressor for grid failure time to raise the gas pressure, the rejoinder said, adding that the PDB proposed dropping this generator considering several realistic factors.

"When there will be a grid failure, power plants near Haripur Power Plant will also trip, so gas pressure would be raised up and Gas Booster Compressor would not be needed to start up."

Therefore there will be no need for the emergency diesel generator, it said.

Besides, during blackouts in recent past, "black" startups were

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PHOTO: STAR

Rickshawpullers and pedestrians struggle to pass through a flooded Bandarban road after downpour yesterday.

US chapter of BNP hires lobbyists

STAR REPORT

The US chapter of BNP hired law firm Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman to manage a range of communications intended to promote democratic elections and a democratic government in Bangladesh, according to a news available on the website of Ted McKenna, PR Week, USA.

Under a 12-month \$400,000 contract that began on May 30, Pillsbury or companies under its direction may, among other things, lobby members of the US Congress and their staffs, international institutions, the media and other "concerned persons" in the US or elsewhere, according to a recent filing with the US Justice Department.

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Another suicide attack kills 4 in Pakistan

Musharraf holds crisis talks amid violence

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan's embattled President Pervez Musharraf Friday convened a crisis meeting over an upsurge in Islamist violence as another suicide attack killed at least four people near the Afghan border.

The latest blast in a week of violence that has claimed more than 200 lives came as the United States ramped up pressure on Musharraf to hunt down al-Qaeda and Taliban militants -- and threatened to go it alone if he fails to do so.

Musharraf, under pressure from all sides, also faced a court decision key to his political future, with a panel due to rule on his battle against the chief justice he ousted in March, who has since become a pro-democracy icon.

The latest suicide attack hit the tribal area of North Waziristan, as government officials and Pashtun elders met in a secret location to salvage a ceasefire accord that pro-Taliban militants there scrapped this week.

"A suicide attack on a paramilitary checkpoint in North Waziristan

killed four people -- three civilians and one soldier," chief military spokesman Major General Waheed Arshad told AFP. A gunbattle broke out after the blast.

Musharraf has vowed to hunt down al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters allegedly hiding in Pakistan's rugged areas on the Afghan frontier, according to the United States and Nato forces in war-torn Afghanistan.

The military ruler -- who sparked Islamist rage by ordering troops to storm a pro-Taliban

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Kidnappers kill trader, abduct another in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Criminals abducted a businessman and demanded a ransom of Tk 2 lakh in Meherpur early yesterday, while another businessman was killed in Kushtia on Thursday night.

According to Meherpur police, a gang of criminals went to the house of Abdul Mannan at Shyampur village under Sadar upazila in the district at about 3:30am.

They called Mannan's son Hamidul, 40, out of the house and kidnapped him at gunpoint. Later, the gang demanded Tk 2 lakh from Hamidul's family for his release.

Hamidul owns two storehouses at the local market. Ali Kadam, a relative of the abducted businessman, told newsmen that a gang demanded Tk 50, 000 in toll from Hamidul two months ago. As Hamidul refused to comply with the demand, the gang threatened

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7 robbers held with arms in two districts

STAR REPORT

Police arrested 17 robbers with firearms and ammunition in Narayanganj and Rajbari districts early yesterday.

According to our Narayanganj correspondent, a police patrol team found a gang of eight moving suspiciously on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Borabo under Rugganj upazila at around 2:30am.

Being informed by the patrol team, police from a nearby camp reached the spot, surrounded the gang members and arrested them.

The arrestees are Rajib, 30, Kalu, 30, Sakir, 27, Falu, 30, Faridur Islam, 27, Jakir, 26, Nuru, 40, and Nazim, 30.

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Positive response for BNP council amid emergency

Pro-reform leaders claim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-reform leaders of the BNP yesterday said they have contacted most of the councillors and received positive response to the plans to hold a council with the state of emergency still in force.

Resolved to bring radical changes in the BNP constitution, they also claimed that Chairperson Khaleda Zia would have to do a lot of answering at the council for the current disaster brought on by widespread corrup-

tion during the alliance rule. "Most of the grassroots level leaders have responded positively to the reform proposals," ZA Khan, adviser to the BNP chief, yesterday told The Daily Star.

He also said the council would be held once they are done with communicating with the rest of the councillors. He added that they would soon meet Khaleda Zia for her consent to the council.

Meanwhile, questions have arisen among the pro-reform

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Korean sues chairman of Korean company

Implicates Huda, Sigma

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Korean national has filed a case against former communications minister Nazmul Huda, his wife Sigma Huda and two others including chairman of a Korean company and an associate of a law firm headed by Sigma.

The accused Korean is Bo-Sun Park, chairman of TaeHung Packaginging BD Ltd at Joydevpur in Gazipur and the other is Monir Hossain Kajol of law firm Chancery Chamber. The case was filed with Motijheel Police Station on Thursday night.

In the case statement, complainant Ms Ok-Kyung Oh said she was managing director of TaeHung Packaginging BD Ltd and also owned its shares worth \$ 3.70 lakh. Backed by some powerful corrupt persons in Bangladesh, Bo-Sun Park made

all attempts to misappropriate her shares and oust her from the management of the company and also from Bangladesh.

The complainant also said Bo-Sun Park prepared a false resignation letter by forging her signature and submitted it to the office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms (JSCF) in 2004. As she filed an application against this move, the registrar called all concerned to his office and fixed different dates for hearing with June 30, 2005, being the last one.

The complainant said she appeared in person and Monir Hossain appeared for Bo-Sun Park on June 30 at the office of the registrar. Kajol gave her his mobile phone and requested her to speak with a caller.

"As I attended the phone call,

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None involved in corruption will be spared

Says Lt. Gen Masud

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Coordinator of National Task Force on Prevention of Serious Crimes Lt. Gen Masud Uddin Chowdhury said nobody involved with corruption would be spared from legal actions.

A person having allegations of corruption will be brought to justice disregarding his or her support for reforms or otherwise, said Masud, also the principal staff officer of Bangladesh Army. "Wait and see, everybody [corrupt people] would be brought to justice," he said.

Masud was speaking at the students' reunion of Police Lines Institution. The programme was held at a community centre in

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Pratibha Patil to face big challenge

AFP, New Delhi

Pratibha Patil, the demure-looking 72-year-old politician set to become India's first woman president, has her work cut out to win the country's confidence.

A virtual political unknown, her victory is set to be announced this weekend after the opposition

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BCL call to abstain from classes

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League, demanding Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina's immediate release, called on students across the country to refrain from attending classes and taking examinations tomorrow (Sunday), even though it is illegal to do so during the state of emergency.

In a press release yesterday, Chhatra League president Mahmud Hasan Ripon and acting general secretary Shahinur Rahman Tutul said they would also hold demonstrations at district level on Tuesday and at upazila level on Thursday.

Ripon said they would go for tougher programmes if the government did not meet their demands immediately.

The Chhatra League programme coincides with Dhaka University Teachers Association's (Duta) half-day work-abstention programme from Sunday. Duta on Thursday declared the programme demanding the same.



PHOTO: STAR

Advocate Sayma Khanam with husband and wards.

MURDER OF ADVOCATE SAYMA Horror still haunts 8-yr old daughter

SHARIFUL ISLAM and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Supreme Court lawyer Sayma Khanam's eight-year-old daughter Tofa is yet to get a grip on herself after her mother was brutally murdered inside her flat four days

ago. "How will I live without my mother," with these words and eyes filled with tears Tofa, a class III student of Scholar School and College, tried to express her grief.

Her only brother Mohammad

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5 US, British soldiers killed in Iraq

AP, AFP, Baghdad

Insurgents killed three British troops and two American soldiers in a separate attacks in southern and central Iraq, coalition officials said yesterday.

Several British soldiers were also wounded in the Thursday mortar attack on their base at the airport in the southern city of Basra, the British military said. The two Americans were also killed in separate attacks Thursday in the Baghdad area, the US said.

The British deaths bring the number of British soldiers killed in the Iraq war to 162. The much larger American force has lost at least 3,630 service members, according to an Associated Press count.

US and British officials hope that stepped up military operations around Baghdad will give Iraqi leaders the chance to reach power-sharing agreements to establish a long-term peace in this country.

On Thursday, Sunni legislators returned to parliament after a five-week boycott, raising hopes the assembly can make progress on

legislation demanded by Washington before the lawmakers take a month's break in August.

The 44 members of the Iraqi Accordance Front attended Thursday's parliament session after striking a deal with the Shias and Kurds to reinstate the Sunni speaker, Mahmoud al-Mashhadani, who was ousted by the Shia-dominated assembly last month for erratic behaviour.

Under a face-saving formula, al-Mashhadani is expected to resign after presiding over a few sessions. One official said al-Mashhadani was to step down Wednesday or parliament will force him out.

Prayer Timing		
July 21		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-54	6-58
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation