

## AL for legal battle

**FROM PAGE 1**  
talks with the EC without Hasina. They fear it might have to face a huge crisis if they sit in a dialogue before settling the issue of her release.

"Although her image among the public has increased following the arrest, we did little for her on behalf of the party," said a central leader seeking anonymity.

"We are no stranger to military rule. In similar situation in the past, we had waged fierce movement. But I wonder what has become of us?" the AL leader continued.

He however said most of the leaders believe that after Hasina's arrest on July 16 the AL has become united more than ever before. "If opportunity comes, we will think of alternatives including a movement on the streets. But everything will depend on how this government conducts itself," he added.

Another leader in exchange for anonymity said even the so-called pro-reform leaders seem to have resigned themselves to the fact that currently there is no alternative to working in unison with the acting president.

The AL leaders believe the government is becoming unpopular with the people for the way it is treating the AL chief and trying to keep her in jail.

### AMONTH IN JAIL

Detained on July 16, Hasina has been shown arrested on two extortion cases filed by businessmen Azam J Chowdhury and Noor Ali.

The High Court has granted her bail in both the cases. But in response to government appeal, the Supreme Court has stayed the HC bail order in Azam Chowdhury case.

The former premier has been passing her days at a special jail on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises amid fear that she might not get justice. She spends time reading books and newspapers, and offering prayers and reciting from Quran, according to the lawyers, relatives and DIG (prison) Maj Shamsul Haider Siddiqui.

Hasina faces a number of crises including the National Board of Revenue directing all banks and organisations to freeze all her accounts. The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has served a notice, asking her to submit wealth accounts. The ACC order was later stayed by the High Court though she had in the meantime prepared the wealth statement that says her assets are worth around Tk 2 crore.

Meanwhile, her husband Dr Wazed Miah, a nuclear scientist, has been undergoing treatment at a city hospital since her arrest. Although she longs to see her ailing husband, the government has been dillydallying over the matter, said the lawyers who talked to Hasina several times in the last couple of weeks.

They said the jail authorities do not want her to go to the hospital in the daytime for 'security reasons' while she stays determined not to go to the hospital after dark or in the early hours.

On the 32nd death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, she could not offer prayers at the graves of her father, family members and relatives massacred on August 15, 1975. She wanted to talk to her lone surviving sister, son and daughter, but the authorities did not give her the permission.

The AL yesterday appealed to the government to let Hasina speak to her family members over telephone. But DIG prison told reporters that the jail code does not permit anyone access to telephone. He however said they would send the AL application to the home ministry.

### AUGUST 21 PROGRAMME

The AL will mark the third anniversary of the August 21 grenade attack on its rally at Bangabandhu Avenue through placing wreaths at the site of the bloody carnage.

It will also observe a two-minute silence at the memorial plaque in

front of its central office in remembrance of 23 of its leaders and workers who died on the day in 2004.

The party will commemorate the day on a limited scale as the interim government has already said that it would not allow anything beyond laying of floral wreaths.

Zillur Rahman yesterday talked to the senior leaders over the matter and decided to arrange the programmes in line with the government's directives.

Hasina narrowly escaped the gruesome attack that left several hundred people wounded.

## Adviser Karim

### FROM PAGE 16

operator in the country, has sponsored the workshop.

About the government plan for flood victims, the adviser said seeds, saplings and other inputs will be provided for the flood-affected farmers for their rehabilitation.

## Another held

### FROM PAGE 16

not disclose the clues gathered from him.

Danida official Hossain Shahid Suman was abducted from Kew Bu Hree village under Thanchi upazilla of the district on June 25. The security force rescued him from a deep forest after 13 days into abduction.

Earlier, the forces arrested five people, including three staff of local NGOs, for their alleged involvement in the abduction.

## Suicide attack

### FROM PAGE 16

Khairuddin, who went by only one name, had a home in Kandahar city but was the administration chief of Zhari district just west of the city.

Zhari has seen some of the worst violence in the al-Qaeda-linked Taliban's insurgency, including major attacks on international troops with the Nato-led International Security Assistance Force (Isaf).

Kandahar has been a hotbed of violence ever since the Taliban militia emerged from the city and the surrounding region in the early 1990s to take control of government by 1996.

They were driven from power in late 2001 by a US-led coalition for failing to hand over their allies in al-Qaeda, the extremist network behind the September 11 attacks on the United States.

Taliban insurgents are today waging an increasingly bloody campaign that is backed by al-Qaeda and carries out regular attacks against Afghan officials and soldiers, as well as the international troops here to support the government.

The Isaf reported 66 suicide attacks in Afghanistan in the first six months of this year, compared to 47 for the whole of last year.

The violence has intensified lately with rebels repeatedly ambushing troops in the south of the country in recent weeks, in one case trying to overrun a military base.

US and Afghan soldiers have meanwhile been conducting an operation against militants said to be holed up in the mountains of eastern Afghanistan, where the al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden was last spotted in 2001.

Local media reports have said militants have suffered heavy casualties but this has not been confirmed by officials. The coalition will not comment on an ongoing operation.

## Call for regional

### FROM PAGE 16

countries face the dilemma whether to go for development or maintaining environmental standards, the adviser noted.

He said overpopulation has created tremendous pressures on the resources of the country.

"Even in the three ministries I am in charge of, there are many conflicts between development activities and keeping the environment standards," he said.

Enforcement of environmental standards therefore take the back seat, he said adding that a balance must be made between development and environment.

Calling for more regional cooperation in protecting environment the adviser said, "For example, we have the capacity to forecast floods three days ahead. But if we could forecast a day earlier, people would be greatly benefited."

The neighbouring countries therefore should have more exchange of information on such issues to save lives of people, he said.

"Collective wisdom will be under serious question if we do not go for actions now," he said, adding that environmental laws also need to change as new issues come up in course of time.

Chairing the session, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies Executive Director Dr Atiq Rahman said some of the small island countries would disappear if the sea level rises by 1.5 metres.

"Environment cost is not considered when electricity is produced in an industrialised country," he said, adding that the mountains, water and air belong to all human being and all should work so that none of these are affected.

S Rizwana Hasan of Bela, Sneha Barot of American Bar Association and Lalanath de Silva of Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide of Sri Lanka also spoke at the inaugural session.

## KL reviewing

### FROM PAGE 16

responsible for high migration cost and exploitation.

Cost of workers' migration to Malaysia is officially Tk 85,000 each but they pay more than Tk 2 lakh.

The rights body, which prepared its report after interviewing 150 jobless and stranded Bangladeshi workers and studying cases of 36 workers, said their living conditions were deplorable and unhealthy. And passports of the workers were taken away on arrival.

"We want the outsourcing strategy for labour employment be scrapped as it has failed and caused human rights violations," it said, demanding actions against the outsourcing companies under Anti Trafficking in Persons Act.

In such a situation, Bangladesh government asked recruiting agencies to inspect by themselves the workplaces in Malaysia before they sign contracts with the outsourcing companies there, said an official of the expatriates' welfare ministry.

The agencies however showed mixed reaction to this.

"The job demand letters that outsourcing companies send to us are attested by the Bangladesh High Commission in Kuala Lumpur only after inspection of the workplaces. So, the recruiting agencies need not inspect those," said a member of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira).

If there are violations of contracts by employers in Malaysia, Bangladesh government should take it up with the Malaysian authorities who are to ensure that the workers are safe.

Another recruiting agent however said there would be less chances of workers' exploitation and violation of contracts between workers and employers if the agents themselves check if the workplaces are genuine.

## Bhuiyan

### FROM PAGE 1

"We all will agree with most EC proposals," Bhuiyan said, adding that a few proposals may need to be discussed with the political parties and different social organisations. "So, the EC now should use all its efforts to prepare a voter list."

According to party sources, most party leaders are not ready to join the EC dialogue before implementation of their reform proposals. They think the party leadership might change if the party council could be held after the current flood situation is over.

Meanwhile, BNP chairperson's adviser Brig Gen (ret'd) Hannan Shah recently said the party will not sit in dialogue with the EC to discuss electoral reforms if the ban on indoor politics is not withdrawn.

He also hinted that the party chairperson will take action against the dissident leaders led by the party secretary general for their anti-party activities.

But the leaders under the leadership of Bhuiyan, who are working to hold the party council to bring changes in the party constitution, want to implement their proposals before party politics is open again.

It is noted that Awami League Acting President Zillur Rahman also said his party will not participate in the EC dialogue if the ban on indoor politics is not lifted.

## Saarc Development

### FROM PAGE 16

Fund for the Differently Able Persons, in addition to the South Asian Development Fund (SADF).

In order to avoid proliferation of funds, the First Meeting of Financial Experts was convened in September 2005 to look at the entire gamut of issues relating to funding of Saarc projects and programmes.

The 13th Saarc Summit in Dhaka on November 12-13 in 2005 decided to reconstitute the SADF into SDF to serve as the umbrella financial institution for all Saarc projects and programmes.

The SDF reconstituted with a permanent secretariat, with three windows – social, economic, and infrastructure. The social window, with an initial amount of \$300 million, is expected to fund poverty alleviation programmes and projects among others.

Through the infrastructure window, funds will be mobilised from within and beyond the region to finance infrastructure projects, while the economic window will fund other non-infrastructure commercial projects.

Ahead of the finance ministers' Delhi meeting, experts comprising officials of finance and foreign ministries as well as the government agencies concerned are scheduled to meet in Kathmandu on August 21-22 to finalise their recommendations on the SDF's charter and by-laws.

## Voter listing

### FROM PAGE 1

until August 22. Registration of national identity cards in the six wards will begin on August 23 and continue until August 27.

As many as 165 registration centres were set up in 31 wards where 1,605 enumerators, 321 supervisors, 35 assistant registration officers and 831 computer data entry operators will perform their duties.

Sources in the District Election office said Tk 35 lakh has been estimated as expenditure for voter registration with photograph and preparation of national identity cards.

City Mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman has asked the ward commissioners to extend all-out cooperation to the army in voter registration and other election related work.

## Tk 350 cr octane

### FROM PAGE 1

standard. This means the project has to be emission-free and sulphur-free," said the official.

Axen is now conducting final feasibility study for the project while a local company named Ecomac is conducting environmental impact study. These studies will be completed by mid-September.

"The project's financial closing will be completed by November and from December floating of tender for construction of the plant will take place," the official said.

Meanwhile, the government has asked the Chittagong Port Authorities to evict 150 illegal settlers from a canal's bank near the site of the proposed plant to comply with the project's environmental requirements. The MJFC will help these people resettle through a negotiation.

Initially, the government will sell 100,000 tonnes of naphtha to this plant annually to produce 80,000 tonnes of octane plus another 10,000 tonnes of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). The import-substitution value of this LPG is another six million dollars or Tk 40

## Khaleda to name

### FROM PAGE 1

united so that no misunderstanding or confusion is created within the party.

Our correspondent in Rajshahi reports: Brig Gen (ret'd) Hannan Shah, political adviser to Khaleda, who was visiting Rajshahi, Naogaon and Bogra, told reporters that the BNP chief sent him with a message for all party men. "She asked all to remain united so that no misunderstanding or confusion is created among ourselves," said Hannan.

"Stay united and pray to the Almighty Allah for the people of the country and the party so that we can work together again," Khaleda said during a brief teleconference with local party leaders at the house of former city BNP general secretary Advocate Enamul Haque.

Hannan Shah said his visit was not political. "I have come to Rajshahi to visit the shrine of Shah Mukhdum (Ra) as I visited the shrines of Shah Jalal (Ra) and Shah Paran (Ra) after I was released from jail."

Criticising the present government's anti-corruption actions, he said, "I have support for anti-corruption moves of any government, but I do not hold up the idea of harassing or undermining someone falsely labelling them as corrupt."

Hannan said, "Those who are hatching conspiracy against the party and those who will be punished by the court will face action in the party council after the ban on politics is lifted."

Hannan went to Rajshahi in the morning and visited the shrine of

Another separate experts' group is also due to meet in Kathmandu on August 24-25 for the recommendations on greater economic integration that will help form the Saarc Economic Union, foreign ministry officials said.

Saarc Secretariat has already issued a circular inviting all member countries for the experts' group meeting in order to kick-start the process of the fund, which has already been delayed due to dispute between 'powerful member' countries.

Talking to The Daily Star, a finance ministry official said the August 24-25 meeting would come up with their recommendations on investment promotion, service sector development and formation of a regional customs union.

The least developed members have favoured the process of developing a capital market, arguing that the linkage of capital markets mobilises funds for the domestic markets.

Saarc was founded in 1985 comprising Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Afghanistan became the 8th member of Saarc at its 13th summit in Dhaka while China, Japan, South Korea, the United States and the European Union became observers of the organisation at the Dhaka summit.

## Women's body

### FROM PAGE 16

night in the bedroom along with his eight-year-old son Masum and six-year-old daughter Maria, police sources said. Later, he sent his son to a relative's house at Chandina, Comilla and his daughter to her maternal grandparents' house. Mansur even made an earthen oven on his wife's grave and cooked food there.

Police arrested him 11-days after Masuda went missing. Initially, Mansur provided police with a cooked-up story that Masuda disappeared from Dhaka where she went to look for a job in a garment factory.

Masuda's brother Noor Hossain filed a murder case and alleged that Mansur used to torture his sister for dowry. He said they had agreed to give Mansur Tk 70,000 as dowry and had already given him Tk 30,000 which he squandered by gambling. He claimed recently they gave him the rest of the dowry as well.

## Power loom

### FROM PAGE 1

Belkuchi, Kamarkhand and Kazipur upazilas, said at least 34 crore B5, lakh taka have been lost in handloom sector and about 20 crore taka in power loom sector in those four upazilas.

Wahid Ali, officer of the same board of Sahazadpur and Chouhali upazilas, said the flood has caused loss of at least 20 crore taka in handloom and power loom sectors in these upazilas.

He said at least 40 thousand handloom and power loom units out of over 53 thousand have been submerged in the two upazilas. In Ullapara upazila 14,681 loom units have been damaged, said an official of the board. A preliminary survey report of the board says Ullapara loom owners lost over 11 crore taka.

Md Mahabubul Alam of Tamai village in Belkuchi upazila under Sirajganj district, who is the owner of 27 handlooms, said he lost at least Tk 1,89,000 due to the flood and 100 loom workers of his industry are passing their days without any work.

Abdus Salam Molla, another handloom owner in the same village, said he lost at least Tk 1,30,000 due to the flood and Tk 2 lakh will be needed to reopen his 25 looms.

More than 150 crore taka has been lost in handloom and power loom sectors in eight upazilas in Sirajganj and Pabna districts according their preliminary door-to-door survey, said Fazal Talukder, president of a handloom industry association in Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj district.

Abdus Salam Molla, another handloom owner in the same village, said he lost at least Tk 1,30,000 due to the flood and Tk 2 lakh will be needed to reopen his 25 looms.

More than 150 crore taka has been lost in handloom and power loom sectors in eight upazilas in Sirajganj and Pabna districts according their preliminary door-to-door survey, said Fazal Talukder, president of a handloom industry association in Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj district.

Abdus Salam Molla, another handloom owner in the same village, said he lost at least Tk 1,30,000 due to the flood and Tk 2 lakh will be needed to reopen his 25 looms.

More than 150 crore taka has been lost in handloom and power loom sectors in eight upazilas in Sirajganj and Pabna districts according their preliminary door-to-door survey, said Fazal Talukder, president of a handloom industry association in Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj district.

Abdus Salam Molla, another handloom owner in the same village, said he lost at least Tk 1,30,000 due to the flood and Tk 2 lakh will be needed to reopen his 25 looms.

More than 150 crore taka has been lost in handloom and power loom sectors in eight upazilas in Sirajganj and Pabna districts according their preliminary door-to-door survey, said Fazal Talukder, president of a handloom industry association in Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj district.

Abdus Salam Molla, another handloom owner in the same village, said he lost at least Tk 1,30,000 due to the flood and Tk 2 lakh will be needed to reopen his 25 looms.

More than 150 crore taka has been lost in handloom and power loom sectors in eight upazilas in Sirajganj and Pabna districts according their preliminary door-to-door survey, said Fazal Talukder, president of a handloom industry association in Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj district.

Abdus Salam Molla, another handloom owner in the same village, said he lost at least Tk 1,30,000 due to the flood and Tk 2 lakh will be needed to reopen his 25 looms.

More than 150 crore taka has been lost in handloom and power loom sectors in eight upazilas in Sirajganj and Pabna districts according their preliminary door-to-door survey, said Fazal Talukder, president of a handloom industry association in Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj district.

Abdus Salam Molla, another handloom owner in the same village, said he lost at least Tk 1,30,000 due to the flood and Tk 2 lakh will be needed to reopen his 25 looms.

More than 150 crore taka has been lost in handloom and power loom sectors in eight upazilas in Sirajganj and Pabna districts according their preliminary door-to-door survey, said Fazal Talukder, president of a handloom industry association in Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj district.

## US troops fight Sunni militants holed up in Iraqi mosque

### Four more GIs die in separate incidents

#### AP, AFP, Baghdad

US troops clashed with suspected Sunni insurgents holed up in a mosque north of Baghdad and launched an air-to-ground Hellfire missile into the structure.

Four more American soldiers were killed in the fighting and non-battle related causes, the military said yesterday.

The soldier was killed and another was wounded when troops stationed at a nearby outpost came under heavy small-arms fire from the Honest Mohammed Mosque late Thursday in Tarmiyah as they targeted about six insurgents who were believed sheltered inside, according to the military.

Three more American soldiers have died in Iraq, including two who lost their lives due to non-battle related causes, the US military said yesterday.

One soldier died of wounds sustained from "enemy fire" in Baghdad province on Thursday, the military said, adding another soldier was also wounded but had returned to duty.

It also said two soldiers had died of "non-battle related causes" on Thursday and an investigation was launched into their deaths.

The latest losses brought the military's death toll in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion to 3,699 and to 49 in August alone, according to an AFP count based on Pentagon figures.

The US forces then cordoned off the area and, unable to find the mosque's preacher, sent the Sunni mosque's groundskeeper into the building to persuade those inside to come out after they refused calls on loudspeakers, the military said.

"About 20 left the mosque and stated there was no one left in the mosque. This was not true," said Lt Col Michael Donnelly, a military spokesman for northern Iraq. He said those 20 had been detained.

Troops spotted gunmen on the roof so the missile was fired at the building, Donnelly said, adding that attack helicopters spotted three suspects running from the mosque but did not fire on them.

The wounded soldier was treated for superficial injuries and returned to duty, the military said.

A police officer and a witness, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they feared retribution, said US troops stationed near the mosque came under fire before sunset prayers and the raid occurred as worshippers left the building after the services. The missile left a hole in the minaret, they said. The military said the roof of the mosque sustained only minor damage.

Mindful of the sensitivities surrounding places of worship, US forces generally avoid directly raiding mosques in Iraq, instead providing a cordon while allied Iraqi security forces search the buildings. But the military claims Shia and Sunni militants take advantage of the reluctance to use mosques as hideouts or as storage for weapons caches.

"These insurgents displayed total disregard for the community by using a mosque, a sacred place for Muslims worship, as a sanctuary to commit their acts of terror," said Maj. Mike Garcia, spokesman for the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

## Power loom

### FROM PAGE 1

Belkuchi, Kamarkhand and Kazipur upazilas, said at least 34 crore B5, lakh taka have been lost in handloom sector and about 20 crore taka in power loom sector in those four upazilas.

Wahid Ali, officer of the same board of Sahazadpur and Chouhali upazilas, said the flood has caused loss of at least 20 crore taka in handloom and power loom sectors in these upazilas.

He said at least 40 thousand handloom and power loom units out of over 53 thousand have been submerged in the two upazilas. In Ullapara upazila 14,681 loom units have been damaged, said an official of the board. A preliminary survey report of the board says Ullapara loom owners lost over 11 crore taka.

Md Mahabubul Alam of Tamai village in Belkuchi upazila under Sirajganj district, who is the owner of 27 handlooms, said he lost at least Tk 1,89,000 due to the flood and 100 loom workers of his industry are passing their days without any work.

Abdus Salam Molla, another handloom owner in the same village, said he lost at least Tk 1,30,000 due to the flood and Tk 2 lakh will be needed to reopen his 25 looms.

More than 150 crore taka has been lost in handloom and power loom sectors in eight upazilas in Sirajganj and Pabna districts according their preliminary door-to-door survey, said Fazal Talukder, president of a handloom industry association in Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj district.

Abdus Salam Molla, another handloom owner in the same village, said he lost at least Tk 1,30,000 due to the flood and Tk 2 lakh will be needed to reopen his 25 looms.

More than 150 crore taka has been lost in handloom and power loom sectors in eight upazilas in Sirajganj and Pabna districts according their preliminary door-to-door survey, said Fazal Talukder, president of a handloom industry association in Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj district.

Abdus Salam Molla, another handloom owner in the same village, said he lost at least Tk 1,30,000 due to the flood and Tk 2 lakh will be needed to reopen his 25 looms.

## PHULBARI COALMINE PROJECT

# Clarify position on accords with AEC

## Caretaker govt urged

#### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Electricity-Port yesterday demanded the caretaker government clarifies its position on all agreements with Asia Energy Corporation (AEC) regarding Phulbari coalmine.

Leaders of the committee demanded formal cancellation of the AEC Phulbari open-pit coal project and urged the caretaker government to take stern actions against the AEC and "those involved with the conspiracy to extract coal through open-pit method".

In the face of public protest against the AEC's Phulbari coalmine project, BNP-led four-party alliance government was compelled to sign a treaty with the protesting locals of Phulbari, Dinajpur and announce that AEC would be ousted and no open-pit mining would be allowed in the country. But the