

Khaleda's lawyers prepare to start legal battle

RASHIDUL HASAN

Counsels of detained BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia are preparing to start a legal battle at the High Court to free her by challenging the legality of her detention. They will also file a bail petition as an immediate measure to free Khaleda.

A number of lawyers yesterday held a meeting with the BNP's newly appointed Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain to discuss strategy and work plan to free their detained chairperson.

"Lawyers have been asked to decide the next course of action to start the legal fight to free the chairperson," Delwar Hossain told reporters.

A number of lawyers led by former deputy attorney general advocate Helal Uddin Mollah yesterday went to the special jail on the parliament building complex to collect Khaleda's signature on

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Fight for control intensifies in BNP

Bhuiyan calls meeting of leaders today; Delwar also in touch with grassroots

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

Rival factions of BNP, led by its expelled and newly appointed secretaries general, are now engaged in a battle over control of the party at all levels.

Expelled Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday called upon the party's central and district level leaders and its former lawmakers to attend a meeting scheduled to be held today in his Gulshan residence. Sources said the meeting has been called to finalise a strategy for ensuring the Bhuiyan faction's control over the

party. Meanwhile, newly appointed Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain has also started contacting leaders of different levels to garner their support for now detained chairperson of the party, Khaleda Zia.

"Mannan Bhuiyan has no post in the party, he is not even in the party anymore...so he cannot call any meeting using the party's name," Delwar told The Daily Star yesterday.

According to the Bhuiyan faction's plan, its de facto chief, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, will hold a series

of meetings with the party's national executive committee as well as with its district committees starting from today, to take decisions regarding facing the new situation brought forward by his 'unexpected' expulsion, the sources said.

A leader close to Bhuiyan said a major decision might come out of today's meeting of pro-Bhuiyan leaders, and they might even take a decision against Khaleda Zia, who on Monday expelled Bhuiyan and Ashraf Hossain from the party and appointed Khandaker Delwar as

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Both factions want EC to invite them

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Both the factions in the BNP now have their eyes on the Election Commission's (EC) invitation for the talks on electoral reforms since the call is likely to stamp the recipient as the mainstream at this point in time.

Leaders loyal to detained Chairperson Khaleda Zia plan to inform the EC about the latest changes in the party's line-up. In a letter, they would also request the

commission to correspond with the newly appointed secretary general for any official purpose.

"We will take legal measures if the Election Commission sends the invitation meant for the BNP to its expelled secretary general," Rizvi Ahmed, assistant office secretary of the party, told The Daily Star after meeting Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain.

On the other hand, those united in favour of expelled secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan

have initiated measures to prove themselves as the mainline of the party by marshalling leaders and workers down to the grassroots level.

They think getting the EC's invitation will amount to being recognised as the real BNP now.

"We represent the original BNP. We hope the commission will send the invitation for us to join the dialogue since most of the leaders and workers are with us and we

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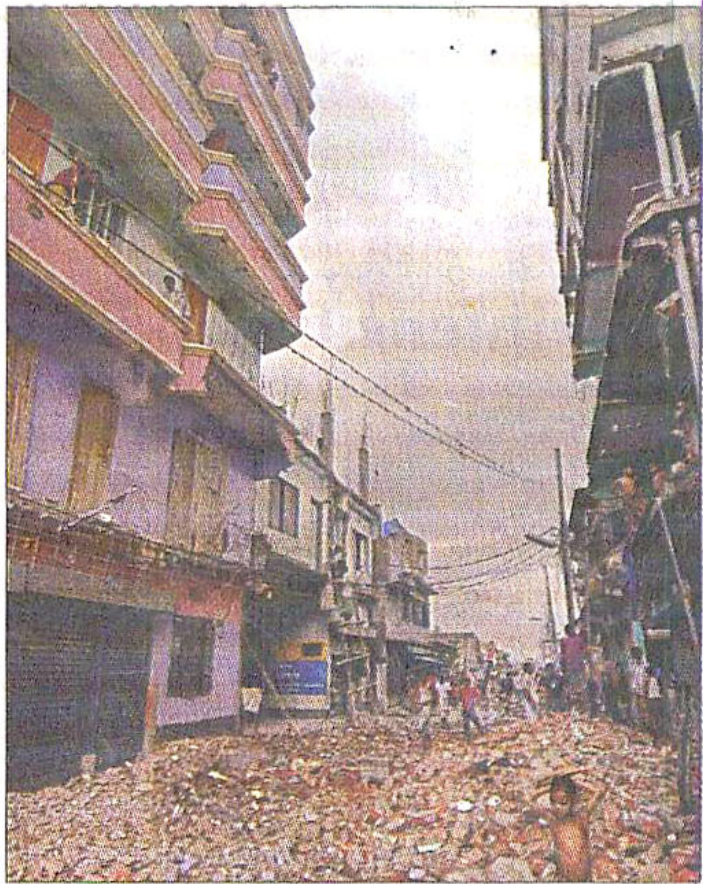


PHOTO: STAR

Owners of buildings constructed on land belonging to Dhaka Wasa in Hazaribagh tear down the illegal structures themselves after the authorities announced that those would be demolished.

CA, army chief sit today with business leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At a high profile meeting with the country's top private sector stakeholders today, the government high-ups will listen to the business community, especially about their 'wariness' to run business under the current situation.

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed, Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed and Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam, among others, will attend the meeting at Radisson Water Garden Hotel in the capital.

The government arranged the meeting against the backdrop of the business community's earlier claim that they feel lack of confidence in running business smoothly due to different measures taken by the government.

After a meeting with the visiting IMF (International Monetary Fund) delegation at the secretariat, the finance adviser yesterday briefed the journalists about today's meeting with the business community.

"We want to know whether the business people lack confidence in running business under the current situation. Then the govern-

ment can take corrective measures if necessary," he said.

He however said the macro-economic indicators in last seven months do not reflect a 'lack of confidence' that the businessmen and media are saying about.

Aziz said most of the macro economic indicators including export, import, remittance, and credit to private sector are on the right track.

He admitted that the growth of working capital has come down to 15 per cent this fiscal year (FY) from 18 per cent of the previous FY.

Import of essential commodities including rice, wheat, crude oil and pulses increased in 2006-07, he said, adding that 7.14 lakh tonnes of rice, 17.52 lakh tonnes of wheat, 10.53 lakh tonnes of crude oil and 4.25 lakh tonnes of pulse were imported in FY 2006-07.

"But we don't have any proper system to coordinate between supply and demand which results in high inflation. Local production did not increase following the growing demand of consumers," he said.

"Increase in per capita income is one of the reasons behind the

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HYDERABAD BLASTS Dhaka rejects Delhi's claim of suspect's arrest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka yesterday rejected New Delhi's claim that one of the suspects of the August 25 bomb blasts in Hyderabad had been arrested in Dhaka as well as the claim that New Delhi had sought Dhaka's assistance to rein in the perpetrators.

Mohammad Touhid Hossain, acting foreign secretary, told The Daily Star last night, "The home

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STRANDED PAKISTANIS Govt to decide their citizenship today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A high profile inter-ministerial meeting will decide today whether the Urdu-speaking stranded Pakistanis living in Bangladesh will be given citizenship and national identity cards.

The home ministry which is under Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed has convened the emergency meeting. Top officials of different ministries and agencies are expected to attend the meeting to examine legal aspects of the issue, sources said.

Earlier, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda sent a proposal to the chief adviser to urgently settle the issue of about three lakh stranded Pakistanis living in the country.

"The matter of deciding the citizenship of the people in the

camp is very urgent for the reason that after introduction of the National Identity Card as a condition for delivery of a number of services, these people may lose access to many services they currently enjoy. Even renewal of a rickshaw licence would require presentation of an ID and no ID will be issued to a person who is not a citizen of Bangladesh," CEC Huda said in a letter to the chief adviser on June 29.

Secretary to the office of chief adviser and secretaries of the ministries of foreign, law, justice and parliamentary affairs, and food and disaster, Election Commission (EC) Secretariat, inspector general of police (IGP), director general of DGF, director general of National Security Intelligence, director general Immigration and Passport Directorate, additional IGP

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Tk 3CR EXTORTION CASE Court's decision on charge sheet against Hasina, Rehana today

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court will decide today whether the charge sheet of a Tk 2.99 crore extortion case against detained Awami League (AL) chief Sheikh Hasina, her sister Sheikh Rehana and their cousin Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim will be accepted.

After scrutinising the case docket and other relevant documents, Metropolitan Magistrate KM Ruhul Amin will pass the order on the issue.

On July 24, Officer-in-Charge Obaidul Haq of Gulshan Police Station, also the investigation officer of the case, submitted the charge sheet to the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate against Hasina, Rehana and Selim. A total

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Ex-MP Fazlul Haque Milon arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former BNP lawmaker AKM Fazlul Haque Milon was arrested on corruption charges in the capital's Gulshan area early yesterday, a highly-placed Rab official said.

He was wanted in a case with Joydevpur Police Station in Gazipur for allegedly misappropriating corrugated iron (CI) sheets meant for relief, Gulzar Uddin Ahmed, additional director general of Rab, told the Daily Star yesterday afternoon.

He said the BNP man was caught under the Emergency Power Rules, adding that he will be handed over to Ramna Police Station. Ramna police confirmed that the ex-lawmaker was turned in to them last night.

Gulzar said Rab arrested the former Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal president when he was driving through the upscale neighbourhood in the predawn hours yesterday.

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2 DU teachers sent to jail after remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The two detained Dhaka University (DU) teachers arrested on charges of breaching the emergency power rules were sent to jail yesterday having spent 11 days in police custody.

They were also shown arrested in another case filed with Ramna Police Station for vandalising public and private properties and obstructing police from performing duties at Shantinagar, Malibagh and Mouchak in the capital on August 22.

On completion of a four-day remand, Ramna police produced the two teachers-- General Secretary of Dhaka University Teachers' Association Prof Anwar

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Intel to give ICT education to students of Bangladesh Chairman announces

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Intel Corporation Chairman Dr Craig Barrett yesterday announced introduction of its Intel World Ahead Programme aiming at providing information and communication technology (ICT) education and its access to the general population across the country.

"We are excited about bringing in our global experience to Bangladesh," Barrett said at a news conference in the city during his brief visit to the capital. The World Ahead Programme, which Intel has been running worldwide for many years now, will be implemented jointly with Grameen Solution in collaboration with the government.

Dr Barrett noted that ICT brings four impacts on the society -- education, economic development, healthcare, and e-governance. "I visit 30 countries each year and all of those countries

share the same vision of a future where ICT would play its due role," said Barrett, who also chairs the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development.

To attain the impacts, the Intel programme aims at improving four basic foundations ensuring access to information and communication technology (ICT), Internet connectivity, development of the content of local education, and training teachers in using the technology in educating children.

"Education is vital in developing a skilled workforce," Barrett said adding that Intel has committed to donate about 1,000 computers to schools over the next three years. Intel will work with the government to implement the programme and will donate enough personal computers (PCs) next year to set up a PC lab in all 64 districts of the country.

Dr Craig Barrett pointed out that

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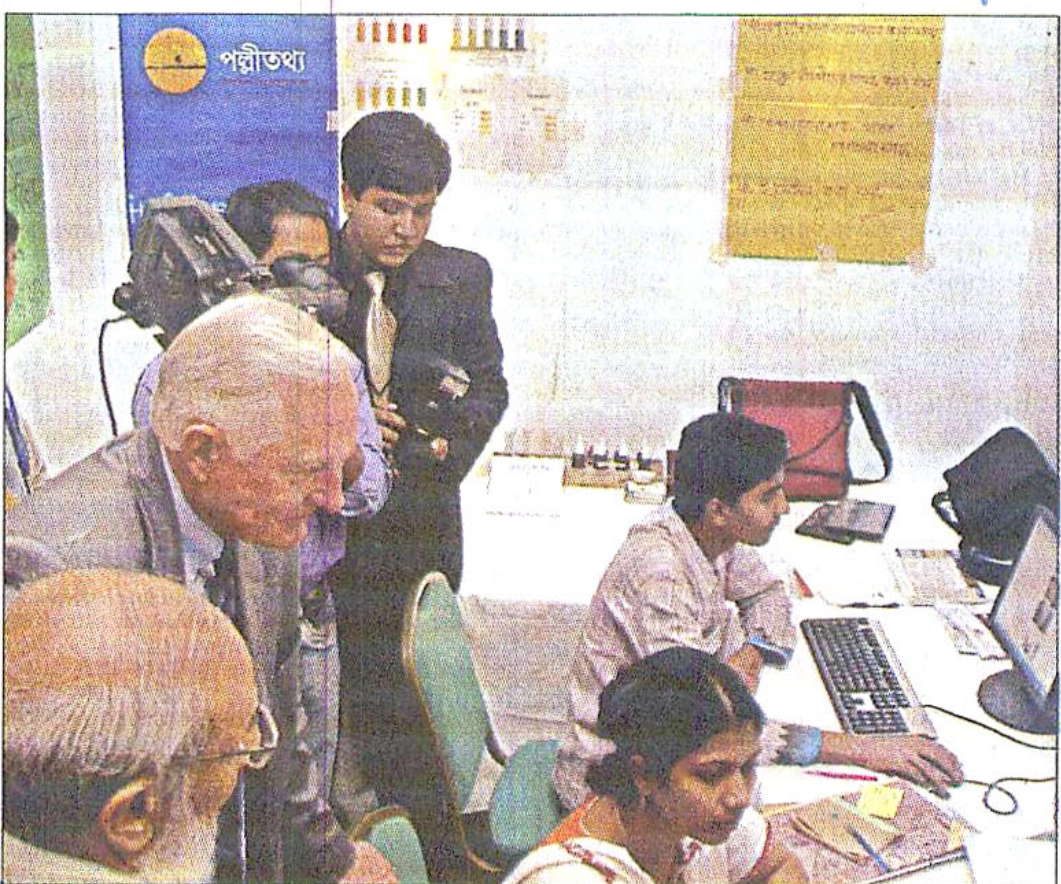


PHOTO: STAR

Chairman of Intel Corporation, world's largest semiconductor company, Craig Barrett visits a stall at an ICT exposition at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday.

CA wants Intel as Bangladesh's partner in IT

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed has urged Intel Corporation to make Bangladesh a partner in its programmes, particularly in IT sector, in order to take advantage of the tremendous business opportunity in a huge market of 140 million people.

Fakhruddin also gave assurance of all-out support from the government when visiting Intel Chairman Craig Barrett made a courtesy call on him at his office yesterday.

Barrett said Intel is interested in the development of ICT and education sectors and also in any other potential sectors in Bangladesh if the government has interest, suitable policy and support.

In response, the CA assured the Intel chairman of government support in every case and said Bangladesh is a small country but it is large in terms of its population with a huge market potential, according to the CA's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim.

The Intel chairman said his

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Twin suicide bombings in Pakistan kill 25

AP, AFP, Islamabad

Suicide bombers attacked an army bus and a commercial district in a city near the Pakistani capital on Tuesday, killing at least 25 people, the army and police said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the explosions, which injured dozens and deepened the sense of crisis in Pakistan amid political uncertainty ahead of elections. Officials suggested the bombings were the work of Islamic militants, possibly in response to Pakistani military operations near the Afghan border.

The first explosion devastated the bus early Tuesday morning as it travelled through a high-security area of Rawalpindi, a garrison city just south of Islamabad and the

headquarters of the army. Military spokesman Maj Gen Waheed Arshad said the vehicle belonged to the Defence Ministry. He declined to identify the victims, though police said many were soldiers.

Television pictures showed how the blast had ripped the roof off the white bus and blown out all the windows.

As ambulances transported victims from the bus blast, a second bomb carried on a motorcycle went off in a nearby commercial district, killing several more people, said Zainul Haq, a city police official. Two military caps were visible inside one of several cars badly damaged in the second explosion.

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