

Hasina's treatment

FROM PAGE 1
In another development, prison authorities yesterday denied news reports that Hasina's close relations were denied meetings with her at the makeshift jail in the parliament building complex.

Home Adviser Maj Gen (ret'd) MA Matin instructed the prison authorities yesterday morning to send medical specialists to Hasina according to her wish, and asked the doctors to submit reports.

"I've instructed the inspector general of prisons to send a lady doctor to examine the health of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina today. The doctor will ask her about her problems. If she wants specialists, that will be arranged too," Matin told reporters after a meeting at the shipping ministry yesterday.

Asked about sending Hasina abroad for treatment, he said, "Let there be a medical report first. If necessary, another high powered medical board will be formed and steps will be taken in line with the recommendations."

"If the board recommends sending her abroad, we'll do so," he said. On receiving instruction from the home adviser, the prison authorities contacted Hasina yesterday noon to know if she has any particular choice of physicians and to make appointments for medical checkups.

"She said she is not ready for the examination today, she would rather have it done tomorrow," Inspector General of Prisons (IG-prisons) Brig Gen Zakir Hassan told The Daily Star yesterday.

The prison authorities are scheduled to arrange the check up after talking to Hasina this morning.

According to the former premier's wishes, who is also the president of AL, the prison authorities contacted five medical specialists: Dr Abdullah of medicine, Dr Pran Gopal of ENT, Dr Muddasir of ophthalmology, Dr Shailla Khatun of gynaecology, and Dr Habibe Millat of cardiology.

"The next course of action regarding her treatment depends on what the doctors say tomorrow," the prison boss said yesterday.

Hasina was taken to Square Hospital on February 21 for a medical check up for the first time since her arrest and was taken back to the special jail after about three hours of examination by a 10-member medical team in the hospital.

Meanwhile, asked about the treatment of another detained former premier also the chief of BNP, Khaleda Zia, the home adviser said in the morning that a medical board will also be constituted for her treatment, if necessary.

Ex-MP Bakul

FROM PAGE 1
Piece of land over four kathas in Gulshan, a Toyota Land Cruiser worth over Tk 45.23 lakh and furniture worth Tk 5.55 lakh.

However, the wealth statement mentioned that his wife owns two flats in Gulshan, shares of companies worth over Tk 5.29 crore, Tk 60.74 lakh in cash and 40 tolas of gold. She also has two fixed deposit receipts (FDR) worth over Tk 25.03 lakh and two deposit pension scheme (DPS) worth over Tk 1.07 lakh.

Bakul, who was in the last ACC list of 35 graft suspects published on October 4, claims he also owns three firearms. He has two FDRs worth Tk 9,000 and over Tk 6.24 lakh as investment for insurance. He also spent over Tk 40,000 to buy bonds.

He also owns two houses and part of a house in Narsingdi, the wealth statement showed.

The wealth statement also said his two sons own nine decimals of land in Narsingdi. His daughter has an FDR worth Tk 6 lakh, over Tk 1.18 lakh in cash, 20 tolas of gold and electronic appliances.

Bakul submitted the statement through his lawyer advocate Abul Khair Monday.

Hannan Shah

FROM PAGE 1
Khaleda Zia-appointed Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain is trying to avoid the unification process issue saying they do not know anything about the claims of Hannan Shah.

Delwar is not aware of Hannan Shah's statement or the stage of the unification process, said Rizvi Ahmed, BNP pro-Khaleda office secretary.

Hannan Shah did not divulge his strategy but his initiative created conflict within his own faction which may turn into a formal division, leaders feared.

However, both groups of leaders of the pro-Khaleda faction said the Saifur-led faction must cancel the decisions taken by BNP standing committee meeting held October 29 at Saifur's house before uniting the party.

Hannan Shah while talking to reporters at his Mohakhali home yesterday said, "We have contacted them [pro-Saifur leaders] and we hope the process to unite the party will succeed."

He also said they have started the unification process following dissenting leaders' admission of their wrongdoings and due to the expectation of party leaders and workers.

"I firmly believe they [pro-Saifur] will return to the mainstream and would be given honourable posts but they have to cancel the decisions of October 29 meeting," he said.

He said after the party chairperson is freed, the party would take necessary steps regarding expelled leaders following the BNP constitution.

Replying to a question on local government elections, he said the main task of the caretaker govern-

NGO disappears

FROM PAGE 1
Some 100 victims yesterday noon went to the Natore DC office to submit a memorandum demanding justice. But police intercepted them on the way and army also intervened to quell the agitating mob.

Earlier on Monday, participants of a meeting at the DC office demanded arrest of four Probhati officials -- president Azhar Ali and employees Ishaq, Joyal and Lalu -- who were also present.

But Lipi took charge of them assuring the meeting that they would not disappear, while the four also promised to return the money from next morning.

However, Probhati members went to the office at Nasratpur to find that the four had fled.

Infuriated, the members swooped on Lipi, wife of swindling Durjoy Bangla's adviser Shahin Alam, and clashed with police, who also baton-charged the mob to rescue her. She was committed to Natore General Hospital under police protection.

Police yesterday arrested four fleeing officials including Bazul Rahman, Probhati adviser, and Lalu of two NGOs in Natore and Rajshahi.

People held Shariful, Fazlur Rahman, his son Asaduzzaman and Soab of Naba Jagoron in Satbaria in Puthia. Following a negotiation, the four agreed to return Tk 59 lakh of unpaid Tk 98 lakh to Natore members and were handed over to police after returning Tk 38 lakh in cash and cheque.

In another drive, locals caught Meher Ali of Target-20 and left him bound all day long in Chaukhali in Brammapur. Despite repeated calls, police did not rescue him.

A number of such NGOs in Puthia, Rajshahi however started returning members' money amid police vigilance, said Shilmaria UP Chairman Sajjad Hossain.

Prof Mahmuda Islam of Department of Sociology at Dhaka

Edible oil
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Though the businesspeople agreed to follow the rates fixed in the meeting, the prices of soya bean and palm oils reportedly marked a rise on the market.

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In case of exception in the selling prices of edible oils, people have been asked to inform the commerce ministry "immediately".

Earlier on Monday, the government banned export of soybean and palm oils for six months to ensure its "sufficient supply on the domestic market".

Blackout
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This state (Bangladesh) has been tagged as a 'failed state' as we have failed to try the war criminals. We can get rid of this dishonour by bringing the war criminals to justice," he said.

Maj Gen (ret'd) KM Shafiullah vowed to resist any electoral alliance with anti-liberation war elements including Jamaat-e-Islami.

Lt Col (ret'd) Abu Osman Chowdhury said they would compel the government to take initiatives for trying the war criminals.

He urged the government to form a mass probe committee to identify war criminals and try them under the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act.

"If the government so wishes or delegates power to us, we can prepare the list of war criminals," said war hero Abu Osman Chowdhury.

Maj Gen (ret'd) CR Dutta, Lt Gen (ret'd) Harun-ar-Rashid, Maj Gen (ret'd) M Mashudur Rahman, Maj Gen (ret'd) Jamil Din Ahsan, Dr M Sarwar Ali, Dr MA Hasan, journalist Harun Habib, M Hamid, and Anwar Kabir, among others, were present.

Khaleda's counsel
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Rahman told Khaleda's counsel that if the court decides that issuing the letter to Hafiz was not legal then it will mean Khandaker Delwar is secretary general of BNP and if the court decided it was legal, then it will mean Hafiz is secretary general of BNP. The court asked Khaleda's counsel if the court has jurisdiction to give any political decision.

Replying to the question Khaleda's counsel said, "We are here [in the court] not for any political decision, we are here to challenge the Election Commission's letter."

Khaleda's counsel said it would not have been objected if the EC issued the letter to BNP central office addressing secretary general of the party.

Citing BNP's constitution, he mentioned that Khaleda Zia has absolute authority in the party. He said Khaleda is the only elected leader in the central body of the party, the rest are nominated.

Senior counsel for Khaleda advocate TH Khan was also present inside the court during the hearing while Dr Kamal Hossain was also present as counsel for the EC.

Hearings is to continue today. On November 5 last year, the EC invited Hafiz to the dialogue scheduled for November 22. On October 29, BNP's standing committee appointed M Saifur Rahman and Hafiz as acting chairman and acting secretary general of BNP.

Khaleda's counsel argued that there is no provision for appointing acting secretary general in the BNP constitution.

On November 18, a High Court bench issued a rule on the commission, Maj (ret'd) Hafiz, six BNP standing committee members and the government, asking them as to why the EC's invitation letter should not be declared illegal.

The commission issued the rule following a writ petition filed by Khaleda challenging the legality of the EC's letter.

Khaleda, prior to her arrest on September 3, expelled Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and Ashraf Hossain expulsion and appointment of Delwar as party's secretary general.

Rizvi Ahmed, BNP pro-Khaleda office secretary, said Delwar went to Singapore for treatment and would return after a week's stay.

He said Delwar and his aides believe that united BNP is possible if pro-Saifur leaders cancel their October 29 meeting decisions and accept Khaleda's decision regarding expelled leaders following the BNP constitution.

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Life whipped out

FROM PAGE 1
University said isolation has increased while kinship and social bonding have deteriorated in the society -- paving the way for some pervers who take advantage of and exploit vulnerable girls.

Asked about security concerns, all the high officials from the museum said the storeroom is very safe as nobody is allowed to get in.

Some items are remaining there for years, insiders say, adding that the museum authorities have not displayed those.

Except the two 'Vishnu' statues, the last theft at national museum occurred in 1991, sources said. From the display of the gallery, unidentified thieves cut off and stole a lion-faced arm from the throne of Dighapatia king of Natore.

"Since then, the throne has been kept in the store room. A case was filed in this connection but that yielded no developments," said a museum high official.

Asked how they ensure safety to the treasures, the high officials said once an item is registered with the museum and gets an accession number, two wings constantly look after it.

"So nobody can just enter the store and remove something from there," said the register.

The register went on to say that they keep written details of every single treasure. "If it's a terracotta statue, we write down its size, weight, colour and every detail of the figure. So nobody can simply change the items," the register added.

"No single person is eligible to keep the keys alone and nobody enters the store without valid reason," said Samar Chandra Poul, director general of the museum.

"All these artefacts are kept at the store where no outsider is allowed to enter, even the museum staffs but officials concerned."

According to museum sources, of the four wings, History and Classical Art now has 67,164 items, Ethnography and Classical Decorative Art 11,740 items, Contemporary Art and World Civilisation 4,958 items and Natural History has 2,319 items.

According to the register, the museum collected only 14 items in 1965, while only 34 items were added last year.

The year 2007 witnessed the lowest collection in the last 42 years. The year 1986 saw the highest collection ever, as 8,192 items were added to the treasures.

Following the recent theft, the government, as requested by the museum, has taken measures to increase number of police guards, since the museum's own security system is not good enough.

Tk 12 lakh missing
FROM PAGE 16
Talking to The Daily Star, Firoz Ahmed, assistant general manager of the bank, said, "Although the incident took place inside the bank, we have nothing to do as the money went missing after payment."

Iqramul Huq, deputy director of the DSHE, filed a case with Shahbagh Police Station without accusing anyone.

Shahidul Islam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Shahbagh Police Station, said, "It is a mysterious incident."

"Two or three bank employees might have been involved with the incident," the OC said adding that both the DSHE and bank staff are under their suspicion.

Tarique
FROM PAGE 1
proceedings of the cases.

A division bench comprising Justice Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman and Justice Shaiful Islam passed the orders following two separate petitions and also stayed the proceedings of the cases.

Despite the HC orders for setting him free on bail, Tarique Rahman cannot come out of jail as he is implicated in a series of corruption cases, said Mahbubuddin Khokon, a counsel for Tarique.

Owner of a real-estate company and an aggrieved person filed the cases with Dhanmondi Police Station in March and May last year.

In November last year, the High Court issued a rule upon the government to explain why placing of the extortion cases against Tarique Rahman under the Emergency Power Rules should not be declared illegal.

Mugger killed
FROM PAGE 16
Haq, in front of Southeast Bank CDA Avenue Branch near Sholoshobur Gate No -2 at around 2:30pm as he was going to the bank to deposit Tk 1 lakh.

Pedestrians and members of the bank staff came to the rescue of Nurul Haq. They caught two of the muggers and beat them up, injuring Babul and Kamal gravely.

The other two muggers managed to flee on motorbikes. The injured were sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) where on-duty doctors declared Babul dead. Kamal is undergoing treatment.

Police recovered a modern pipe-gun and three rounds of bullet from the muggers' possession. Later, the motorbikes used in the incident were recovered from in front of the Medical Centre at the GEC Intersection.

Sub Inspector Mahubul Milki of the Panchnaish Police Station said last evening that two separate cases were in the process of being filed in this regard.

Artefacts

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US lawmakers scrutinise missile shield

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Congressional Democrats are taking a closer look at the U.S. missile defense program, partly in an effort to pare down its high price tag.

The Democrats are raising questions about the effectiveness of the anti-missile program and investigating whether its testing regimen is realistic enough to demonstrate its capabilities against real attacks. Critics have long contended that the program's tests are too predictable.

Advocate Alina Khan, executive director of Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights, told The Daily Star that these types of violence on women is on the rise with increased feeling of insecurity and unrest in the society.

"More cases of adolescents violated by their uncles or distant relatives are being brought to us lately," she said. The offenders take advantage of the adolescents as they are more vulnerable, she observed saying that the families of the victims often try to conceal the incidents fearing social consequences.

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Obama surges

FROM PAGE 16
The longest and costliest primary race in history.

"What we're going to find out tomorrow is what two really big states have to say, because after all it's still a very close contest in terms of the popular vote and the number of delegates," she told a television talk show late Monday.

"Most primary campaigns until relatively recently lasted a lot longer. My husband didn't wrap up the Democratic nomination until June," she said.

Since the original Super Tuesday of February 5, Obama has been on a roll, and now enjoys a small but clear lead in the Democratic delegate count.

"If we do well in Texas and Ohio, I think the math is such where it's going to be hard for her to win the nomination, and they'll have to make a decision about how much longer they want to pursue it," he told ABC News.

Pressing home his financial advantage after a banner month of fundraising in February, the Illinois senator aired a two-minute ad in Texas that detailed his extraordinary life story and highlighted his opposition to the Iraq war.

Obama leads in Texas by 46-45 percent in his quest to be the first black president, according to polling by McClatchy Newspapers, MSNBC television and the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

A Quinnipiac University survey Monday had Hillary Clinton up 49 to 45 percent in Ohio, but her lead had shrunk dramatically from a 21 point gap on February 14.

New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, a top Democrat who has stayed neutral in the race, argued Sunday that whoever emerges on top after Tuesday should be anointed the party's standard-bearer.

His call is likely to turn into a tidal wave if Clinton loses Ohio and Texas.

According to RealClearPolitics.com, Obama leads by 1,392 delegates to Clinton's 1,279.

McCain is favoured to vanquish Huckabee's challenge on Tuesday because the Republicans award all their delegates to a state's winner.

But the Democratic voting is proportional, meaning that Hillary Clinton would need landslide victories on Tuesday and beyond just to pull even with Obama.

Senator John Kerry, the party's defeated 2004 candidate backing Obama, said Clinton must decide after Tuesday whether she has any path to the nomination.

Tata Group
FROM PAGE 16
But at one stage of negotiations the previous BNP government had decided that the next elected government should take the final decision, prompting Tata to suspend its project in Bangladesh in 2006.