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Russia, China block UN Iran resolution

AP, Vienna
Russia and China yesterday scuttled a Western attempt to introduce a resolution on Iran's nuclear defiance at a meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency, diplomats said.

The decision appeared to be the result of lingering unhappiness by the two world powers about not being informed earlier of plans for such a resolution.

It came a day after the UN Security Council imposed another round of sanctions on Iran for refusing to suspend uranium enrichment. Iran defiantly vowed to continue its nuclear programme, which it insists is aimed only at generating power.

Moscow on Monday had threatened not to back the new UN sanctions against Iran unless the West

gave up its IAEA resolution plans.

Then on Tuesday it signaled that it was ready to back such a document if it was given substantial input in drafting it before deciding later in the day that it was against it after all, said the diplomats, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the information was confidential.

Asked why Russia and China were opposed, one of diplomats said Moscow decided to withdraw its support "on principle" and Beijing, which often takes a cue from Russia on the Iran nuclear dispute, followed suit.

A senior Western diplomat said the decision to scrap plans for a resolution was jointly taken by the six powers taking the lead on engaging Iran on its nuclear programme: the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and

Germany.

He said the six felt that new UN Security Council sanctions passed Monday to punish Iran had sent enough of a message.

Gregory L. Schulte, Washington's chief IAEA delegate, said the new sanctions resolution underscores "that Iran's file remains open" and backs the IAEA's right to continue its probe of Tehran's past nuclear programme, particularly attempts to make weapons.

But two of the other diplomats, speaking separately, insisted the resolution was scrapped because of Russian and Chinese opposition and said any suggestions of unity on the issue were an attempt to cover up an East-West split among the world powers.

A draft of the resolution, marked

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Tata Group still hopeful of \$3b investment

UNB, Dhaka
Indian industrial giant Tata Group is still hopeful of having its proposed \$3 billion investment in place in Bangladesh.

S Manzer Hussain, the resident director of the company, gave the indication at a function organised on the occasion of Tata's founding anniversary on Monday.

"We're still hopeful... we want to continue our relations with Bangladesh whatever the business we do..." said Manzer.

Tata is expected to wait until a stable situation comes back in Bangladesh.

The Tata Group had signed an expression of interest with the Board of Investment (BoI) in 2004 to implement its proposed investment, which includes setting up a steel mill, a fertiliser factory and installing a power plant.

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Cashier of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Kurban Khwaja, centre, after withdrawing over Tk 12 lakh for staff salaries falls victim to cheats at Agrani Bank Jatiya Press Club branch in the capital yesterday.

NIKO GRAFT CASE Khaleda to be quizzed tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka
The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) will interrogate detained former prime minister Khaleda Zia tomorrow in connection with the Niko graft case filed by the commission against her and four others.

A team, headed by ACC Assistant Director Shahidur Rahman, also the investigation officer of the case, will question the former prime minister and record her statements at the makeshift jail.

Following an application from the IO of the case, Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Golam Rabbani passed an order on February 17, allowing the investigation team to quiz Khaleda Zia.

The ACC filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station on December 9 last year against Khaleda Zia, former law minister Moudud Ahmed, former state minister for energy AKM Mosharraf Hossain, former acting energy secretary Khandaker Shahidul Islam, and Vice-President (South Asia) of Niko Resources Bangladesh Ltd Kashem Sharif.

They were accused of signing the deal with the Canadian company causing a loss of Tk 10,000 crore to the national exchequer.

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One-minute blackout called to mourn '71 Sector commanders seek govt authorisation to list war criminals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Sector Commanders' Forum (SCF), a platform of sector commanders of the liberation war, yesterday urged all to observe a one-minute 'blackout' from March 25 midnight to commemorate the horrific 'black night' of 1971.

"We urge all to observe a one-minute blackout in silence in houses, motor vehicles and launches to recall the horrific memories of the black night when mass murder and mayhem took place," SCF President Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) AK Khandker, also deputy chief of the liberation war,

said while speaking at a view-exchange meeting with the journalists of print media at the Retired Armed Forces Officers' Welfare Association (Raowa) club in the capital.

The SCF leaders also asked the government to authorise them for preparing the list of war criminals if it does not wish to do so.

They also officially announced that they would hold a national convention on March 15 at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Convention Centre in the capital to press home their demand for trying the war criminals.

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EDIBLE OIL Dist admin to watch selling at fixed price

UNB, Dhaka
The government has directed the divisional commissioners and the deputy commissioners to ensure that edible oils are sold at the prices fixed earlier.

As a prompt follow-up action, the deputy commissioners have already started market monitoring, said an official release yesterday.

The government in a meeting with the businesspeople concerned held at the commerce ministry on February 25 fixed the price of soya bean oil at Tk 103 per kilogram while palm oil at Tk 96 per kilogram at mill gate.

It also fixed the maximum retail price of soya bean oil at Tk 106.50 per kilogram while palm oil at Tk 99.50 per kilogram.

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Tk 12 lakh missing from bank counter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
About Tk 12.25 lakh of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) went missing mysteriously yesterday from the cash counter of National Press Club branch of Agrani Bank.

Terminating the incident an act of cheating, police said the bank employees might be involved in it.

Sources said DSHE employee of cash section Kurban Khwaja drew Tk 1,224,649 from the bank at about 11:00am to meet the payment of the employees.

"After withdrawing the money, I was waiting at the cash counter for

my colleagues who were supposed to escort me to the DSHE office. Someone from behind told me that some money was on the floor, drawing my attention to it. Turning back, I found out that the briefcase with the money was gone," Kurban Khwaja said.

Mohammad Kabir, principal officer of the bank, told The Daily Star that the money was given to the DSHE employee inside the counter which is beside the vault of the bank.

He said he was in office when the incident took place. He did not notice it as he was busy with his work.

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SHUJAN ROUNDTABLE AL wants JS polls first, JP for upazila

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Awami League (AL) leaders yesterday vehemently opposed the caretaker government's plan to hold upazila parishad polls before the parliamentary one, apprehending that it would adversely influence the national elections due this year.

Jatiya Party (JP) leaders however extended strong support to the government's proposal, with civil society members expressing mixed reactions. On the other hand, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's adviser

Mofazzal Karim remained mum on the issue.

The observations came at a roundtable styled "What sort of candidates do we want in the next elections?" organised by Shushashoner Jannoy Nagorik (Shujan) at National Press Club in the capital.

"We support election to the local government bodies, but sense a conspiracy behind it if it is to be held first," said AL leader Dr Abdur Razzak.

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Prayer Timing		
March 5		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-10	5-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-07	6-11
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

Suicide bombers kill 5 at Pak navy college

AFP, Lahore
Two suicide bombers blew themselves up at a prestigious naval college in the eastern Pakistani city of Lahore yesterday, killing at least five people and injuring 19, officials said.

One bomber rammed a motorcycle into the gate of the Naval War College in the heart of Pakistan's second biggest city, then the sec-

ond drove another bike into the parking lot where he detonated explosives, they said.

The attack was the fourth in five days in Pakistan, posing a major challenge to the country's incoming government, set to be a coalition led by the parties of slain premier Benazir Bhutto and former premier Nawaz Sharif.

President Pervez Musharraf condemned the bombings, vowing

that the "government will not be cowed down by such acts" and expressing the "resolve to fight against extremism and terrorism," the official Associated Press of Pakistan reported.

The blasts sent thick black smoke billowing over the college and scattered debris and human remains at the scene, which is just off the city's historic Mall Road.

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Swetchhasebak League leader shot dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Unidentified assailants gunned down a Swetchhasebak League leader in the city's Shahjahanpur area yesterday.

The slain, Kawsar Ali, 35, was vice-president of Swetchhasebak League Motijheel unit and owner of a generator shop "Ali Enterprise" at north Shahjahanpur.

Family members quoting witnesses said a gang of criminals spread bullets on Kawsar as he was on his way to a local mosque to say Jehr prayers at around 1:00pm and left the scene.

Locals rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), where the doctors declared him

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Condolence Message

With deep regret we announce the sudden death of our Director Mr. Mahbubuzzaman, Ex. Minister & Cabinet Secretary, who expired on Monday the 3rd March, 2008. The Board of Directors and the Employees of Samorita Hospital Limited have been deeply shocked at his death and pray to the Almighty for the salvation of the departed soul and convey deepest sympathy to the members of the bereaved family. A milad mahfil will be held on Wednesday, March 05, 2008 after Magrib prayer at the Hospital Premises. All friends and well wishers are requested to attend the milad Mahfil.

Samorita Hospital Limited
89/1, Panthapath, Dhaka.

Obama surges to knock Hillary out Voting begins on 'Super Tuesday II'

AFP, Austin
Barack Obama bids yesterday to knock Hillary Clinton out of the White House race after a mudslinging campaign that Democratic grandees fear is helping nobody but Republican heir John McCain. But heading into crunch battles in Ohio and Texas, the former first lady is full of fire and has been eviscerating her charismatic rival's qualifications to be commander-in-chief and chief steward of a troubled economy.

While the Democrats fight it out, McCain looks set to lock up the

Republican nomination by eliminating former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee.

Aside from Ohio and Texas, Rhode Island and Vermont also hold presidential primaries on Tuesday.

The day's voting began in Ohio at 11:30 GMT and will end in Rhode Island at 02:00 GMT Wednesday -- although a quirky electoral process in Texas will see caucuses start after the Lone Star state's day-long primary.

Hillary Clinton said Monday she was just getting warmed up after

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Mugger killed in mob-beating

CU CORRESPONDENT
A mob beat a mugger to death and injured another when a gang of four tried to snatch Tk 1 lakh from a businessman at city's Nasirabad yesterday afternoon.

The dead man was identified as Babul, 35, of Patiya upazila and the injured mugger as Mohammad Kamal, 30, of Rangunia upazila in the district.

Sources said a group of four armed muggers intercepted a local businessman, Mohammad Nurul

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