

## Obama urges world to tear down walls of division and hate

AFP, Paris

Barack Obama headed for Paris yesterday on a European tour that saw 200,000 cheering fans turn out in Berlin to hear the US presidential hopeful call for the world to tear down walls of division and hate.

The Democrat got a rock star welcome for his speech Thursday in Berlin's Tiergarten park, but here he was to make no public appearances except a press conference after meeting President Nicolas Sarkozy before going to London.

There are few votes for any US presidential candidate in being seen to be close to France. John Kerry, the Democratic nominee in 2004, was pilloried by some conservatives just because he could speak French.

But the arrival of the Illinois senator has sparked much excitement in France, where polls mirror those across Europe to show he is the candidate most people want to succeed President George W. Bush in the November vote.

"Obamania" read the front-page headline Friday in the Liberation newspaper, which said that "the Democratic candidate fascinates the world and shows he has the makings of a president."

The election last year of the rightwing pro-US Sarkozy greatly improved US-French relations, which were poisoned by France's staunch opposition to the 2003 US invasion of Iraq under then president Jacques Chirac.

Sarkozy told Friday's edition of Le Figaro newspaper that 46-year-old Obama, whom he met in 2006 in Washington along with his 71-year-old Republican rival John McCain, was a "friend."

"Unlike my diplomatic advisors I never believed in Hillary Clinton's chances. I always believed that

## Flood

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people of these areas have started moving to higher grounds.

Meanwhile, erosion on the Jamuna has taken a serious turn for worse at the five upazilas. Around 300 homes in Sirajganj municipality have been swallowed up by the raging river.

Workers of WDB are dumping sacks of sand and rubble on the bank to protect the locality from erosion, WDB officials said.

Our correspondent in Netrakona reports: The flood situation in Netrakona is improving especially in the bordering areas of Durgapur and Kalmakanda. However, the situation is deteriorating in the low-lying areas, Netrakona WDB sources said.

The newly flooded unions are Kalmakanda Sadar, Pogla, Barkapona in Kalmakanda upazila and Jangali union in Durgapur upazila.

The water levels of the Someshwari, the Mogra, the Kongsha and the Dhanu are flowing above their danger levels.

River erosion has deteriorated on the Someshwari. A 2km stretch of road of the Shibganj-Ranikong road in Durgapur upazila, the only link between Durgapur upazila headquarters and bordering villages, went into the Someshwari.

Sources said most of the houses in Kalmakanda upazila headquarters have gone under two to three feet of floodwater.

Many areas of Mohanganj and Khalajuri upazila headquarters have also been inundated by floodwater.

Road communication between the district headquarters and Durgapur upazila Sadar has snapped as a portion of a road near Janzil Bazar was damaged by floodwater. Road communication between Netrakona district headquarters and Kalmakanda upazila Sadar is also disrupted.

A correspondent in Munshiganj reports: More low-lying areas of the district went under water due to the rise in the water level of the Padma river.

He said he would love to give a speech in Berlin, but only as president.

McCain, a Vietnam veteran and former prisoner of war who has long been an influential voice on foreign policy and defence, took a swipe at his rival on Thursday, visiting a German sausage restaurant in Ohio.

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district Relief Officer Rawshan

Alam said they are ready to face the situation with Tk 97,000 and 49 tonnes of rice in their relief fund.

## Hasina

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each other for the incident.

Al General Secretary in the US Sajjadur Rahman blamed President Prof Khalid Hasan for creating chaos at the airport and demanded his expulsion, News World reports.

The other group blamed Sajjad, Mamudunnabi Baki, Faruk Hamid, Syed Bosar Ali and Dr Siddiquar Rahman for the incident.

Ena, however, reported that the incident took place after Khalid was expelled from the party for his alleged involvement in anti-organisational activities.

Hasina blasted the two groups of agitating leaders and activists, saying, "Do you want to tarnish the image of Bangladesh?" Then she left the airport.

Earlier in the morning, an anonymous caller informed the airport authorities that a chaotic situation would occur if more than five persons are allowed to enter the airport to receive Hasina.

Hasina is supposed to undergo eye treatment and a few medical tests in Washington. Dr Hasan Mahmud, who is accompanying Hasina in the USA, told the press that she is likely to go to Florida for ear treatment and then fly for London again.

Hasina arrived in America on June 12 for treatment after she was released on bail. She left for London via Canada on July 6.

When contacted, Prof CR Abrar,

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