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Japan PM resigns

Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda yesterday announced his resignation, calling for a fresh start after a troubled year in power that saw bitter fighting with the opposition.

"Today, I have decided to resign. We need a new line-up to cope with a new session of parliament," Fukuda told a hastily arranged news conference.

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IRREGULAR WORKERS IN KUWAIT
Amnesty to work little for lack of ID papers

Visa traders took all those away to ensure slavery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The irregular Bangladeshis without proof of identification in Kuwait will not be able to take advantage of the 45-day amnesty announced Sunday for illegals there.

Shahriar Kader Siddiky, labour counsellor of the Bangladesh embassy in Kuwait, yesterday said, "We can provide temporary travel documents for an illegal against copy of his passport, civil ID or bank card. But it's not possible to do anything without those."

The unscrupulous visa traders taking away passports or civil IDs from the migrant workers has become commonplace in many Middle Eastern countries.

They do it in collusion with employers to force the workers to toil for wages way less than what their job contracts pledge, according to labour watchdogs.

Like other Asian nations, Bangladesh welcomes the amnesty allowing the irregular foreigners to regularise their status or leave the country without fine, reported Arab Times Online yesterday.

Of around 2.5 lakh Bangladeshis in Kuwait, several thousands are believed to be illegals.

Siddiky said the Bangladesh embassy has started receiving applications seeking temporary travel documents. It has been deluged with calls from irregular Bangladeshi workers enquiring

about the amnesty.

He added that the embassy is working to set up a counter for amnesty seekers. Besides, it will soon start leafletting labour camps, urging Bangladeshis to take advantage of the amnesty.

"Our representatives will visit various camps in efforts to convince the illegal Bangladeshi workers to avail themselves of the opportunity. Last year, the amnesty period coincided with the peak travel season and as a result many Bangladeshis could not use it."

Embassies of other developing countries too have been busy dealing with the applications for temporary travel documents.

Criminals murder 3 brothers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A gang of criminals yesterday killed three brothers at Radhagobindapur village in Meherpur.

The dead are Jahidul Haq, 45, a businessman, and his brothers Emdadul Haq, 40, a member of Kathuli Union Parishad and Ruhul Haq, 33.

Police said a gang of 25 to 30 armed criminals allegedly belonging to Dukhu Bahini surrounded their house at Radhagobindapur village at about 3:00am.

The criminals asked Jahidul to come out of the house. When he came out, they killed him on the courtyard.

Then, they called Jahidul's brother Emdadul out of the abode. The criminals killed him when he stepped out.

Sensing the ill intention of the criminals, Jahidul's other younger brother Ruhul decided not to step out.



This truck got stuck yesterday in a pothole under floodwater at Kadirer Bazar on Faridpur-Charvadrasan Road. Communication snapped as the road has gone under knee-deep water at places. Story on page 1.



In the wake of recurrent explosions of CNG cylinders of vehicles, a mobile court confiscates a substandard cylinder from a human haulier in front of Nagar Bhaban in the capital yesterday. Story on page 1.

EXTORTION CASE
Hasina's trial deferred until Sept 8

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special court yesterday deferred to September 8 trial proceedings in the Tk 2.99 crore extortion case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her cousin former health minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim.

Judge M Ashraf Hossain of the Special Court-5 also asked the defence to submit copies of the High Court (HC) ruling in the case, and writ petition filed by it.

3 DEPZ factories shut over unrest fear

KAILASH SARKAR

Apprehending violence among workers, three garments factories owned by foreign investors at Dhaka Export Processing Zone (DEPZ) in Savar have been closed for indefinite periods in the last 15 days.

Sources noted that as Ramadan has begun, labour unrest might increase on eve of the Eid-ul-Fitr in demand for wages, bonus and other facilities.

Of the three factories, Indian-owned GB Garments was closed on

Sunday.

Around 400 workers of the factory were carrying out agitations demanding eight-day Eid vacation instead of six-day now.

Earlier, Korean factory Softex Garments with 2,200 workers and Taiwan-owned A-One Garments having 3,500 workers were closed in the third week of last month for similar reasons.

Another factory -- Hope Lon (BD) Ltd -- was closed on August 24 for unrest among workers. It resumed production to days later.

Ex-ambassador Nazim charged with Tk 13 lakh embezzlement

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday pressed charges against former Bangladesh ambassador in Abu Dhabi Nazimullah Chowdhury in a case filed against him on charges of causing a loss of Tk 13.47 lakh to the state exchequer through misuse of power and deception.

ACC Deputy Director Abdullah Al Zahid, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted

JMB leader gets 34yrs in arms case

UNB, Gazipur

A court here yesterday sentenced a leader of the banned Islamist outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) to 34 years rigorous imprisonment in arms and explosive cases.

Special Tribunal Judge S M Rezaul Karim awarded JMB regional commander Abdullah Al Suhail 20 years imprisonment in the arms case.

He was also awarded 14 years imprisonment for possessing explosives and fined Tk 20,000, in default, he will have to suffer for another six months.

According to the prosecution, Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) members arrested Abdullah from Ashulia bus stand in Dhaka on January 30, 2006 and recovered three LGs and some explosives from his possession.

Two cases, one under Arms Act and the other under Explosive Substances Act, were filed against the JMB leader.

All 4 accused acquitted in Manjurul Imam murder case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A Khulna court yesterday acquitted all four charge-sheeted accused in the Awami League (AL) leader Advocate Manjurul Imam murder case.

The acquitted persons are outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) members Ganesh Banerjee, Shahadat Hossain Raju, Shukur Gazi and Sheikh Abdul Rabbi alias Ripon.

Khulna Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal Judge Abdus Salam Sikder pronounced the verdict in presence of the accused at 1:30pm.

In the judgment, the judge observed that there was not enough evidence to convict any of

the accused of murder charges. Besides, the case's merit was spoiled due to frequent change of investigation officers, the judge added.

Special Public Prosecutor S.M. Abu Zafar said he would file appeal with the higher court against the judgment.

Family members of the slain AL leader expressed dissatisfaction over the verdict and accused police of spoiling merit of the case.

Talukder Abdul Khaleque, the mayor-elect of Khulna City Corporation, in his reaction to the verdict, said justice has not been done.

Manjurul Imam, president of

Mohammedan Federation Cup champs

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club defeated archrivals Abahani 3-2 in a penalty shootout to lift a record ninth Federation Cup title yesterday.

Zahid Hasan Emily opened the scoring for Abahani after 54 minutes but man-of-the-final Robin struck a 71st minute equaliser as the regulation 90 minutes ended 1-1 at the crowded Bangabandhu National Stadium.

After the extra half-hour failed to separate the two sides, the match went to shootout with Mohammedan taking immediate control after goalkeeper Aminul saved Emily's shot from the spot.

Mamun and skipper Nazrul fluffed Abahani's chances while

68 killed in fresh Lankan fighting

AFP, Colombo

At least 68 people, including two civilians, were killed over the weekend amid clashes between security forces and Tamil Tiger rebels, the defence ministry said yesterday.

Four government troops were killed in a mortar attack carried out by Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas in the rebel-held Wanni region on Saturday, the ministry said.

It said troops also recovered the bodies of 10 rebels killed by troops and estimated the total number of guerrillas killed over the weekend's fighting to be 62.

Five killed in Philippines bus bombing

AFP, Digos

Five people were killed and 32 others were wounded when a powerful bomb ripped through a packed passenger bus in the southern Philippines yesterday, police and disaster officials said.

The blast, caused by an improvised explosive device, tore through the bus, which was parked inside a terminal in the city of Digos on troubled Mindanao island, they said.

It was not immediately clear how many passengers were aboard the bus or how many people were at the terminal at the time of the explosion.

Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Sep	Sehri	Iftar
1	2	6-19	
2	3	4-19	6-18
3	4	4-20	6-17

Prayer Timing
September 2

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-19	4-25
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-19	6-29
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

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