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# FINANCIAL BAILOUT TALKS IN DISARRAY

## Bush asks Congress to stop bickering, clinch deal swiftly

AFP, Washington

US President George W. Bush urged lawmakers yesterday to set aside differences and swiftly pass a huge rescue plan to pull the rattled financial sector back from the brink of collapse.

"We need a rescue plan. It's hard work. Our proposal is a big proposal. And the reason it's big and substantial is because we've got a big problem," Bush said in a televised statement, once again stepping into crisis.

His plea followed a night of political drama after unprecedented crisis talks at the White House with Republican White House hopeful John McCain and his Democratic rival Barack Obama and other top lawmakers failed to yield a breakthrough on the 700-billion dollar rescue plan.

Wall Street stocks sank again on Friday after sharp losses in Asia and Europe as markets were again roiled by the lack of a deal, already seven days in the making.

But Bush sought to ease international fears about the world's biggest economy. "The legislative process is sometimes not very pretty, but we are going to get a package passed," he vowed.

"We will rise to the occasion, Republicans and Democrats will come together and pass a substantial rescue plan.

"There are disagreements over aspects of the rescue plan, but there is no disagreement that something substantial must be done," Bush said.

Pressure intensified for a deal to help soothe the US financial sector after the collapse overnight of Washington Mutual, the largest bank failure in US history.

McCain rushed to Congress early Friday for more talks on the crisis, as a deadline loomed for him to decide whether to take part in the first presidential debate of the election campaign with Obama in Mississippi.

McCain was under fierce pressure after barnstorming into the center of delicate negotiations on the 700 billion dollar bailout package, as Obama made plans to leave for the southern state come what may.

House speaker Nancy Pelosi insisted a bailout deal "will happen, because it has to happen."

"I would hope that we could come to an agreement in the next 24 hours, so we can put the bill in writing and bring it to the floor," Pelosi told ABC television. But

## UN chief may visit Dhaka November 1-2

UNB, New York

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon is expected to visit Bangladesh November 1-2.

Foreign Adviser Iftakhar Ahmed Chowdhury made the announcement during an interaction of Bangladeshi local media with Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at Hotel Helmsley on Thursday.

He said the UN Secretary General's two-day tour of Bangladesh "will bring benefit for the country."

The foreign adviser further informed that Bangladesh has got the commanding post of UN peacekeeping force in Liberia and Georgia.

## Zillur apologised for Ashraf says Rafique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Acting Awami League (AL) President Zillur Rahman yesterday apologised to barrister Rafique-ul-Huq for party General Secretary Syed Ashraf Islam's criticism of Rafique's mediation to seat the AL and BNP chiefs at a meeting.

"Zillur Rahman telephoned me and sought apology for Syed Ashraf Islam's irresponsible comments about my initiative to bring the two political leaders to a meeting," barrister Rafique said.

Zillur also said the comments were Syed Ashraf's own, not the party's. Rafique told reporters before attending a function inaugurating 24-hour ambulance service for Ad-din Hospital in the capital yesterday afternoon.

While talking to reporters on Thursday, without mentioning any name Ashraf asked a lawyer and the business community, who were mediating talks between AL President Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, to mind



Hawkers occupying almost an entire pavement near New Market while people crowded the markets in the area for Eid shopping at the weekend.

## Jumatul Wida observed

UNB, Dhaka

Jumatul Wida, the last Friday of Ramadan, was observed across the country yesterday with religious fervour and sanctity.

A large number of devotees attended the Juma prayers at different mosques, seeking divine blessings for peace and progress of Bangladesh and unity of the Muslim ummah.

The largest Jumatul Wida congregation was held at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque in the capital. Thousands of devotees took part in the congregation and sought blessings of Allah for peace of the departed souls of their near and dear ones and also for the peace and prosperity of the Muslim Ummah.

Special arrangements were made to accommodate the devotees at mosques in different parts of



A large number of devotees offer prayers on the street in front of Baitul Mukarram Mosque in the city yesterday as it was Jumatul Wida, the last Friday of Ramadan.

## ACC unearths Tk 92 lakh assets of Shamim Eskandar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) of Dinajpur unearthed undisclosed properties worth Tk 92 lakh of Shamim Eskandar, younger brother of BNP Chairperson and former prime minister Khaleda Zia.

The ACC on August 18 filed a case against him and his wife Kaniz Fatema in connection with amassing wealth worth Tk 1.33 crore illegally and hiding wealth information from the commission.

Dinajpur ACC officials Wednesday found two more pieces of land of about 44 decimals which he concealed in his wealth statement submitted to the ACC.

On June 20, the ACC seized a car of former flight engineer Shamim Eskandar as it was not mentioned in his wealth statement.

## China's top candy maker halts sales as milk scandal deepens

### India, Libya ban imports of Chinese milk power

AFP, Beijing

China's toxic milk scandal escalated Friday as one of the country's best-known candy brands was pulled off the shelves and more nations around the world imposed curbs on Chinese imports.

The makers of White Rabbit -- a hugely popular candy presented to US president Richard Nixon on his landmark 1972 trip -- announced it was halting domestic sales after its products were found to contain melamine.

It came as the European Union said it planned to stop imports of some products containing milk from China, joining a growing list of nations and regions that had already banned or restricted milk products from the country.

"Europe will continue to expect higher standards as Chinese consumers expect the same," Peter Mandelson, EU Trade Commissioner, told reporters Friday on a trip to Beijing.

White Rabbit producer Guanshengyuan had previously recalled exports after Singapore authorities said they had tested positive for melamine, a chemical which is normally used to make plastic, a spokesman said.

"We've recalled White Rabbit Candy for export overseas, and we are temporarily halting domestic sales," said the spokesman, who declined to be named.

The decision is the latest twist in an embarrassing scandal that has so far sickened 53,000 Chinese children and killed four, after they drank contaminated milk.

Singapore's Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority said last Sunday that White Rabbit samples imported from China were contaminated with melamine, which can make milk appear richer in protein.

Shanghai's quarantine bureau is conducting its own tests on the candies, but the results have yet to be released, the official Xinhua news agency reported.

On Thursday, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency recommended a recall of White Rabbit candies, and Britain's biggest retailer Tesco has said it has also

## HASINA-KHALEDA TALKS AL for initiative from govt, not any individual

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) yesterday said the proposed dialogue between its President Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia could be held only if it was on certain national issues and the government takes a sincere move in that regard.

"To make the talks a success the initiative must come from the government, not any individual quarter. Only then we will seriously consider the matter," acting AL General Secretary Syed Ashraf Islam told The Daily Star.

"If the talks are held on certain national issues, the two leaders can sit together after finalising the agendas and issues by the experts

## 6 killed in Pakistan train bomb attack

### 3 militants blow themselves up

AFP, Multan Karachi

A powerful bomb on a railway track derailed a passenger train in central Pakistan yesterday, killing at least six people, including three children, an official said.

The explosion badly damaged two carriages of the train near the city of Bahawalpur and also injured at least 15 people, senior railways official Khalid Amin said.

"A bomb was planted on the track which exploded when the train reached there," he told AFP. He initially gave a toll of four dead but said two critically injured men died later in hospital.

A woman and three children were the others who were killed, he said, adding that an investigation had been ordered into the incident.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

Pakistan has suffered a string of deadly attacks by Islamist militants in recent weeks, including last week's truck bombing at the upscale Marriott hotel in Islamabad, which killed 60 people and injured 260 others.

## Zardari warns US troops after exchange of fire

AP, Islamabad

Pakistan warned US troops not to intrude on its territory yesterday, after the two anti-terror allies traded fire along the volatile border with Afghanistan.

Thursday's five-minute clash adds to already heightened tensions at a time the United States is stepping up cross-border operations in a region known as a haven for Taliban and al-Qaeda militants.

The clash the first serious exchange with Pakistani forces acknowledged by the US follows a string of other alleged border incidents and incursions that have

## Cable TV man shot dead by criminals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A cable TV operator was killed and another person was injured as criminals opened fire on them at the cable TV office at Shahjahanpur in the city last evening.

The deceased was identified as ABM Shariatullah Billal, 42, owner of Tri Star Media Centre in Shahjahanpur and the injured was identified as Mohammad Mamun, 48.

Witnesses said three criminals entered the office and sprayed bullets on Billal as he was about to have Iftar. Hearing gun shots Mamun went to the office and he was also shot.

Locals rushed both of them to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared Billal dead. Mamun was admitted to the hospital with a gunshot in his chest.

Locals said Zisan Group could have killed Billal due to enmity over dominating cable TV business in the area and collection of toll.

All the shops in the area were closed after the incident and locals fearing reprisal made no statements about the incident to the law enforcers, police sources said.



Locals of Mirpur Mazar Road stage street protest with empty buckets and pitchers yesterday as they have been facing water crisis since the first day of Ramadan.

## MIRPUR SECOND COLONY Thousands without water since first day of Ramadan

HELEMUL ALAM

Shahzadi is visibly exhausted fetching three pitchers of water for her family. But she cannot rest at 11:00am. The 13-year-old must report to the tailor she works for as an apprentice.

It has now been a routine work for Shahzadi. Residents of Chaitaly Road at Second Colony beside Mirpur Mazar Road has not got a drop of water from Dhaka Wasa in the last 25 days.

"It takes about an hour to bring a pitcher of water from Tolabagh on foot," Shahzadi said. Her family does not afford transport costs.

Rickshaw-puller Mohammad Rafique does the same thing after coming back from work at noon.

"I have to bring about 10 buckets of water every day from a distance of about one kilometre to meet the emergency need of my family," he said.

About 7,000 people live in 30 pigeonhole-type houses at the colony, said Dipa Akhter. The owner of house No 66/A/A joined her neighbours Thursday for the first time because she could not hire any people to bring her water.

The hard-pressed residents repeatedly informed Dhaka Wasa of their problems.

"Wasa told us they will give us water every alternate day, but we have not got a drop of water since the first day of Ramadan," Moulana Obaidullah, owner of house No 45/3, said.

"We have been through the crisis for about eight years now. Two years ago the house-owners chipped in with Tk 2,500 to set up a new pipeline. We then got kind of relief for the next two years," Dipa said.

But the crisis began coming back in the past one and a half months back.

**Sehri, Iftar timings**

Ramadan	Sep	Sehri	Iftar
26	27		5-53
27	28	4-30	5-53
28	29	4-30	5-51

**Prayer Timing**

September 27

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-29	4-35
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	5-53	6-03
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

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