

Hasina tells BCL

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International Conference Centre.

Her reminder on the BCL's glorious track record came in the wake of reports involving the name of the organisation.

Bangladesh Chhatra League, the student wing of the AL, arranged the discussion in memory of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib.

With BCL President Mahmud Hasan Ripon in the chair, the meeting was also addressed by Dr Abul Barkat and Mamta Latif. BCL General Secretary Mahfuz Haider Chowdhury Roton moderated the discussion.

Hasina urged all the BCL supporters to be attentive in studying and dedicate themselves to the betterment of the country's people.

"Only a well educated and brave leadership can uphold the glorious history of Chhatra League," she said.

She also laid emphasis on maintaining congenial atmosphere in every educational institution of the country.

The AL president said success of the present government-sponsored Vision 2021 mainly depends on young community of the country, and in this case, BCL can play the most successful role.

She said that to build up a developed Bangladesh, the rural economy would have to be given the top-most priority.

"After examinations, every

worker of BCL can go to the rural areas and involve themselves in educating the illiterate people."

Hasina said if one believes in ideology of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, one cannot indulge in corruption or any other crime.

"Learn about Bangabandhu and mould your life in the light of Father of the Nation's ideology," she told the BCL activists.

She asserted that the verdict of Bangabandhu Murder Case will be executed on the soil of Bangladesh.

"The killers of the Father of the Nation will be punished. But what should be done about those who patronised the killers and are now inspiring the killers by celebrating fake birthday on August 15."

"I leave the matter to people for trial of the patrons of the August 15 killings," Hasina said.

She deplored that the killers of Bangabandhu and their collaborators introduced politics of corruption and terrorism in the country. But the corrupt force did not know that everything couldn't be bought with money and muscle power.

"The people cast their votes against corruption and anarchy at the December 29 polls to elect the AL-led grand alliance," she said.

Hasina observed people's trust and love is the biggest achievement of a politician.

BSF kills 2

STAR REPORT

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) killed two Bangladeshi nationals at Meherpur and Benapole on Sunday and yesterday.

The victims are Ershad Ali alias Engine, 32, a cattle trader of Khalshi village in Benapole, and Sariful Islam, 30, of Ishakhali village in Meherpur.

BSF troops of Angra camp caught Ershad Ali yesterday at Benapole when he was returning from Bongaon and beat him up and tortured with electric shock that left him dead, BDR sources said.

BDR later recovered the body.

In another incident, BSF shot Sariful Islam dead at Ishakhali border on Sunday. BSF took away the body after the incident.

BSF informed BDR of the incident Sunday night.

A BSF team of Taipur camp at Tebhata thana in Murshidabad opened fire on him when he was crossing the border about 4:30am, BDR sources said.

DEATH IN ROAD CRASH

Pabna students

go on rampage

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Pabna

Students of Pabna Edward College went on the rampage following death of a fellow student in a road accident yesterday and damaged at least 40 vehicles.

Salim Reza, a fourth year student of Pabna Edward College, was hit by a Chalmahar-bound bus in front of the college at around 8:30pm on Sunday. He was rushed to Pabna General Hospital where he died yesterday morning.

Hearing the news, students of the college brought out a procession in the town and damaged at least 40 vehicles including passenger buses, private cars and minibuses.

Police dispersed the agitating students and arrested three of them.

Immediately after the incident, transport owners and workers jointly took out a procession in the town demanding punishment to the students who damaged the vehicles. They also put up barricades on different roads, halting traffic in the district headquarters.

In the afternoon, Transport Owners and workers Association called an indefinite transport strike in the district demanding arrest and punishment of the students responsible for damaging vehicles and security of vehicles on all roads in the district.

President of Pabna Motor Owners Association Babi Islam said the transport strike will continue until our demands are met. He claimed that the students damaged at least 60 to 70 vehicles and ransacked a number of shops in the town.

Officer-in-charge (OC) of Pabna Sadar Police Station Md Motiur Rahman said additional police have been at different points of the district headquarters to avert any further incident.

Himalayas

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He however said land prices in rural areas including upazilas have not been increased, except only in Keraniganj upazila on the outskirts of the capital.

The government has also formed separate committees to monitor market prices of land at district and upazila levels, he said adding that lists of land prices will be available at all land sub-registry offices.

The government also reduced prices of land registration stamps, rates of land registration fees, relevant local government taxes, and income taxes at source.

Replying to a question, the law minister said registration cost of apartments will be reviewed later.

Although the government has reduced the rates of land registration fees, its revenue income will increase several times nonetheless, since land prices have been increased quite a bit, said the minister.

Prices of land in Dhaka City Corporation and Chittagong City Corporation areas have been increased four times.

The prices have gone up three times in Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal and Sylhet city corporations; in municipalities of Bogra, Narayanganj, and Gazipur districts; in Tongi and Savar municipalities; and in Keraniganj upazila.

In all other municipalities of other districts the prices have been increased 2.5 times.

The new land prices will remain effective till December 31, 2011, according to a government gazette notification issued on August 25.

First swine flu

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dengue fever at a private hospital in the capital on August 20 and it became a complicated case, said Prof Mahmudur.

The authorities also said, as per the guidelines of the World Health Organisation, people need not waste time with testing for A (H1N1) since the virus has already spread widely. Rather, they should start symptom management treatments and isolating the patients with symptoms.

However, different hospitals, including some of the hospitals provided with special training by the government, are sending patients to test and confirm swine flu without giving them any cautionary messages or treatment.

Talking to The Daily Star at IEDCR, a resident of Uttara said she sought treatment at Uttara Adhunik Medical College and Hospital Sunday after suffering from flu-like symptoms for three days.

"But after moving me around from one table to another for some time they asked me to test for swine flu. They did not give me any other message or symptomatic treatment," said the lady.

Another woman who went to Bangladesh Medical College had similar complaints. "We are now wasting time in the name of testing instead of getting treatment," she said.

Prof Haider Ali, head of the department of medicine at Uttara Adhunik Medical College, said they received training on dealing with swine flu patients and they have started their work from Sunday.

"A two-bed isolation unit has been set up but we are yet to receive the anti-viral drug," he said, adding that the primary symptoms of swine flu and seasonal flu are common and that is why they cannot start treatment for swine flu without being sure.

He said they set up a separate outdoor section for patients with flu-like symptoms.

Visiting different hospitals in the capital The Daily Star correspondents yesterday found out that wards opened up exclusively for swine flu patients are very hard to locate.

In some hospitals the wards were dirty or locked from the outside.

Doctors and nurses as well as the patients in most government hospitals of the city were seen not wearing masks or gloves as precautionary measure.

Even though the government said 15 government and private hospitals have been prepared to manage swine flu patients, the reality is somewhat different.

Most of the people going to those hospitals do not know that there are separate outdoor sections for patients with flu-like symptoms. They do not even know where the isolation units are.

Even the anti-viral drug Oseltamivir is yet to reach those hospitals.

BSMMU: Prof Pran Gopal Dutta, Vice-Chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) said a 100-bed isolation unit has been set up on 16th floor of Block-D to treat swine flu patients. However, the ward is not yet ready for patients.

Infectious Diseases Hospital (IDH): An eight-bed isolation

unit has been set up on July 27 on the second floor of the hospital. Three patients with swine flu were admitted there and cured. One more patient was admitted there yesterday.

While talking to The Daily Star Senior Consultant-in-Charge Arjun Chandra Dey said they have started a separate outdoor corner Sunday for patients with flu-like symptoms and an average of 10 people with flu-like illness are seeking treatment there every day.

He also said IDH has a stock of 5,000 anti-viral drugs for treating 500 patients.

Dhaka Medical College and Hospital: A 10-bed isolation ward for swine flu patients has been set up at the administrative block of the hospital but doctors said it would be moved to the second floor soon.

However, they confirmed that an average of 20 patients a day with flu-like symptoms come for treatment at the outdoor section but no patient has been admitted yet.

Suhrawardi Medical College and Hospital: The swine flu ward, which was opened up about a week ago, remains closed after 2:00pm. There were no directions to the ward for patient making the ward extremely difficult to find.

The Daily Star correspondents eventually found the ward around 3:00pm and it seemed dirty to them after having a peek inside through the window.

Patients and their attendants of other wards said the doctors and nurses leave the ward around 2:00pm.

Emergency Medical Officer Anwarul Kadir of the hospital told The Daily Star that they have been instructed to refer the patients they suspect to be infected with swine flu to the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR).

Dhaka Shishu Hospital: A seven-bed special ward has been opened at the second floor of the hospital. The doctors and nurses of this hospital were seen taking precautionary measures.

The doctors said they have patients with influenza-like symptoms and are taking special care of them. If they suspect anyone to be infected with swine flu, they immediately refer them to the IEDCR.

Mitford Hospital: Brig Gen Khadimul Insan Muhammad Iqbal, director of the hospital, told The Daily Star that they have opened a ward with eight beds a week ago. They will increase the number of beds if the flow of patients increases.

He said, "We have received all the necessary equipment from the government to detect swine flu patients and cure them. The doctors and nurses concerned have been trained as well."

However, Health Minister Prof AFM Ruhul Haque at Bangladesh Secretariat told journalists that there is nothing to be panicked about.

"The county has enough stock of the anti-viral drugs and if treatment starts at primary stage, the death risk will be reduced," he said, adding that what is needed most is to maintain personal hygiene and flu etiquette.

"We should cover our mouth while sneezing or coughing. At the same time wearing mask will be helpful to contain the virus," he added.

TAMING OUTLAWS IGP suggests spl policing in southwest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad yesterday spelt out 'special policing' in outlaw-infested southwestern region to maintain law and order.

"The deterioration of law and order in the southwestern region is nothing new as it has been going on like this since long. So, it is difficult to control the situation without special policing," the IGP told reporters at a press briefing after a meeting on law and order situation with the high-ups in the police.

Asked about special policing, Nur Mohammad said, "We will not beat drums before launching any special drive. Apart from the regular arrangement, additional camps with sufficient logistic support would be set up to deal with the increasing activities of the outlawed outfits in the region."

Already 158 camps have been set up in the region, he said. "We have no information of giving shelter to any outlawed party members by the ruling party men," the police chief said.

Replying to a query, he said at the meeting they thoroughly discussed the extortion issue on the highways and elsewhere in the country whether political party men and members of law enforcement agencies are involved in toll collection.

Nur Mohammad also admitted the involvement of a few police personnel and members of other law enforcement agencies in extortion.

"There are both good and bad people among 1.25 lakh forces of police department," he said adding, "We have received some allegations of extortion on the highways by the law enforcers, but those incidents are very few in number. Stern action must be taken if anyone is found guilty."

Asked about favouring the ruling party men by police, he said, "We have no instruction on 'arrest of other' actions against any political party cadres or other persons involved in extortion and other criminal activities."

On the arrest of businessman AK Azad, the IGP said, "We have just taken an stand after our colleague, an inspector, was physically assaulted and injured seriously."

"We have collected all the information about the incident and nothing unlawful has been done by police," IGP Nur Mohammad said. A probe committee will also be formed to investigate the matter, he added.

45 militants killed in Swat gunbattles

AP, Islamabad

Pakistani soldiers killed at least 45 Taliban militants in scattered gunbattles across the northwestern Swat Valley after a suicide bombing on a police station killed 17 cadets, the army said yesterday.

Hundreds of km away, a southwestern border crossing with Afghanistan reopened after an administrative dispute culminated in an attack on a line of waiting Nato fuel tankers. One driver was killed and 16 trucks destroyed when the fuel caught fire.

Taliban militants were suspected in both the police station bombing and the attack on the trucks, which came hours apart.

The insurgents have vowed to avenge the army's recent offensive to retake the Swat Valley and the death of their top leader in a US missile strike near the Afghan border in early August.

Sunday's suicide bombing in Swat was the deadliest attack since the military regained control of the northwestern region in July.

Soldiers looking for militants after the attack encountered resistance in several areas, and battles that raged into early Monday left 30 dead, army spokesman Col Akhtar Abbas said.

Separate army statements Monday said 15 more militants were killed in security sweeps of five other areas over the previous 24 hours and two soldiers had died.

It was not possible to independently confirm the death toll provided by the army.

The military has said it is restoring security in Swat after its three-month offensive ended the Taliban's rule over many areas there. But suicide attacks and skirmishes continue.

Japan PM-elect

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smooth transition from the government of Prime Minister Tarō Aso, who conceded defeat and said he would step down as president of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

The DPJ won 308 seats in the powerful 480-member lower house in the Sunday poll, against the LDP's 119, ending more than half a century of almost unbroken conservative rule, according to collated official results.

Hatoyama, 62, who is expected to be confirmed by parliament as prime minister in about two weeks, is set to form a coalition with smaller partners such as the Social Democratic Party and the People's New Party.

The US-trained engineering scholar, the scion of a wealthy political dynasty and grandson of a former premier, promised to build consensus and avoid "arrogance" in government after ousting Japan's conservative old guard.

"We will not just bulldoze our policies," he told public broadcaster NHK. "We must exercise patience and seek people's understanding because we have been given such latitude."

Japan's usually risk-averse electorate, frustrated with the country's worst post-war recession, punished Aso at the polls and forced the business-friendly LDP from office for only the second time since 1955.

"We must start anew," a stern-faced Aso said Monday. "To take back the government, I strongly feel that we must regenerate the party."

The LDP is planning to hold a party presidential election on September 28.

Aso's right-hand man, Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura, said the election defeat was a call for the LDP to change and an "extremely harsh result for the ruling party and the government," while vowing a smooth transition.

The DPJ has signalled a solid but less subservient partnership with traditional ally the United States and a desire to boost its regional ties, promoting

ing a European Union-style Asian community and common currency.

In Washington, President Barack Obama's White House said it expected a "strong alliance" with the DPJ and hoped to hold early consultations with Tokyo, including on the stand-off with nuclear-armed North Korea.

South Korea's President Lee Myung-Bak and Australia's Prime Minister Kevin Rudd also congratulated the DPJ and its leader.

BNP's founding

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Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia will be present at Zia's grave and attend the meeting.

The party yesterday held a discussion meeting regarding the occasion at Mahanagar Natyia Mancha.

BNP chairperson in a statement yesterday congratulated countrymen, party leaders, workers and activists and well-wishers on the occasion.

"Bangladesh has become a victim of various conspiracies. All the BNP leaders and workers have to play key role to protect the country's independence, democracy and sovereignty," she said in her message.

Echoing Khaleda, BNP General Secretary Khandaker Delwar Hossain congratulated all and urged the people of Bangladesh to be united to foil all sorts of conspiracy against the country.

Meanwhile, the party would also observe Tarique Rahman's release for the first time on September 3 and the party lawmakers will bring out a procession to mark the day.

Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Farooque asked all the party lawmakers to be present at room 103 of Nam Building at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city on that very day.

Tarique, Khaleda's son, was arrested on March 7, 2007 during an anti-corruption drive by the military-backed caretaker government. He quit politics before leaving the country for London on September 11 last year.

Abortion at wrong

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'operated' on Zakia on Tuesday and charged her Tk 3,500. She asked Zakia to come for a second 'operation' arguing that the child was already mature enough.

"As Zakia showed up today [yesterday] morning, Baby took her to the family planning visitor's room for the second 'surgery'," added the employee who witnessed everything.

As Zakia was bleeding profusely after the 'operation' Baby rushed to Hospital Superintendent Alauddin Al Azad, with whom she allegedly has a very close relation, and informed him the incident, the witness said.

Meanwhile, some hospital staffs entered the room and checked her pulse but found none.

The hospital super immediately called a meeting with his close officials and asked them to spread the death news in a contrasting manner, the witness added.

Within half an hour, all the hospital staffs learned that a patient died of either cardiac arrest or brain haemorrhage.

Alauddin meanwhile called in Zakia's family members and instructed them to receive the body immediately. "The body has to be washed after death, otherwise God will not forgive her sin," Zakia's sister-

in-law quoted Alauddin as saying.

The hospital super refused to talk to The Daily Star and barred the newspaper's photojournalist from entering the hospital compound.

Contacted, Baby said she did not know anything about the incident and asked this correspondent to talk to Alauddin for any query.

The hospital authorities did not issue a death certificate for the victim. Family sources say they were asked to take the certificate after her burial in Barguna, her home district.

"We realised the super was quite busy all day to cover up the incident and requested us to issue a manipulated death certificate. But none of us agreed to do that," said a doctor on the understanding of anonymity.

As the victim was four months pregnant, she was not supposed to undergo the abortion surgery, said Prof AB Bhuiyan of Obstetric and Gynaecological Society of Bangladesh.

Tackle poverty

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Bangladesh. Unless we simultaneously tackle these issues billions of people will suffer badly across the world," said Ed Miliband, UK Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change.

The UK ministers were speaking at a project launching function held at British High Commission Club in the afternoon. British Council in cooperation with Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) launched the project titled "International Climate Champions".

Miliband observed that Bangladesh should raise a voice internationally as it is one of the most vulnerable countries to the climate change.

The UK ministers mentioned that UK is spending around 125 million pound for Bangladesh a poverty reduction and climate change issues.

The new project will select 15 young Bangladeshis to establish a network of climate champions from around the globe. The project will begin with a national competition for people aged between 18 and 35 years who will submit their ideas for undertaking projects on raising awareness toward the issue.

Under the project, young people are going to deal with the challenges of climate change, said Atiq Rahman, executive director of BCAS.

Deer trouble

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in the island's forest has already caused an imbalance compared to the number of deer in the Sundarbans.

The size of mangrove forests in Nijhum Dwip is around 5,000 acres (20 square kilometres) while the rest of the area is yet to be brought under forestation. The size of the Sundarbans is around 14.90 lakh acres where around 1.20 lakh deer live, officials at the Forest Department said.

It has sent the board's recommendations to the forest and environment ministry. However, the ministry is yet to make any decision on it.

Another high powered committee led by the state minister for environment and forest will decide the fate of the recommendations, forest officials added.

Contacted by The Daily Star on August 19, acting Chief Conservator of Forest Abdul Motalab said another meeting on Nijhum Dwip would be held soon to discuss the overall situation there.

Forest officials at Noakhali forest office earlier informed the central forest office about the food crisis in Nijhum Dwip forests in dry seasons.

"The staples for deer are leaves, fruits, seeds and mangrove roots of Keora. But its leaves and fruits go beyond the reach of the deer as the trees grow very tall," Al Amin, a forest guard, told this correspondent during a visit to the island last week.

He said facing the shortage of food, deer leave forests and enter people's homesteads

BDR to beef

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since BDR personnel would be increased in the area.

He said BDR personnel are equipped with arms and steps would be taken soon to provide them with motorcycles.

Chittagong BDR Sector Commander Col Didarul Alam and Bandarban Region Commander Brig Gen Atiqur Rahman were present during the briefing.

Later, Mainul Islam visited the BDR Training Centre at Satkania in Chittagong.

Mej Gen Mainul in R. gamati yesterday said the process of BDR trials would start very soon after the Supreme Court delivers its opinion, reports our Ranganmati correspondent.

He was speaking to journalists after a meeting at Ranganmati BDR sector headquarters.

Prof Yunus

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Prof Hiren Mukherjee, a prominent member of the West Bengal Communist Party, was member of the Lok Sabha for five times from 1952 to 1977, deputy leader of the Communist Party in Parliament (1952-64) and then its leader from 1964 to 1967.

He died in 2004.

The first Prof Hiren Mukherjee Memorial Parliamentary Lecture was delivered by Nobel laureate Prof Amartya Sen in 2008.