

UNGA PM leaves for NY today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leaves for New York this morning to attend the 65th United Nations General Assembly, with an entourage of about 100.

En route to the US, she will make a 20-hour stopover in Brussels where she is expected to meet the European Union leaders. She will reach New York tomorrow. The premier is scheduled to depart from Dhaka on a Bangladesh Biman flight at 8:30am today.

Her entourage includes Foreign Minister Dipu Moni and 15 other officials of her ministry, Planning Minister

Businesses slate cops' link with extortionists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Extortion and drug business in the country are being carried out with "assistance" from a section of dishonest policemen, business leaders have alleged.

"Extortion is openly taking place on highways with police assistance. Police also help run drug businesses," said Mojibor Rahman Khan, one of the directors of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI).

"Businessmen are disappointed with the increasing



LIVING IN DANGER

It is mind boggling that people still live in this building in Shakhribazar of Old Dhaka amid fears of earthquakes that could level the structure any time.

PHOTO:
RASHED SHUMON

BNP high-ups split over joining JS

Farroque tags new conditions, SQ Chy differs

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

The BNP high-ups are divided over joining parliament, which goes into session Monday. So much is the confusion and disagreement that leaders are making conflicting statements about it.

A day after BNP standing committee member Salauddin Quader Chowdhury said BNP would join parliament, Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Farroque at the media centre of the parliament placed two more conditions for the party's joining the House.

He said the government has to stop harassing opposition leaders in the name of trial of

war criminals and withdraw the decision to cancel Arafat Rahman Koko's parole, otherwise BNP would not join parliament.

Asked whether it is possible to meet these demands within a short time since the session is scheduled for Monday, Farroque said, "We will go to the House after the government creates a favourable environment by assuring us of meeting our demands."

Asked about Farroque's comment, Salauddin told The Daily Star that the chief whip is not a member of the standing committee, nor is he a party spokesman. "I don't want to make any comments about the chief whip's opinion as his

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IBRAHIM 'KILLING' CID to take over investigation

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

The government last night decided to send the Jubo League leader Ibrahim Ahmed's murder case to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) for an in-depth investigation.

The decision was taken as the government high-ups including the prime minister and the home minister felt embarrassed over a statement of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner Shahidul Hoque on the role of AL lawmaker Nurunnabi Chowdhury Shaon in the killing.

The DMP commissioner on Thursday repeatedly said Shaon was not involved in the killing.

Home Minister Sahara Khatun took the decision at a meeting of the AL presidium, the highest policy making body of the ruling party, upon directives from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, sources at the meeting said. The meeting was held at the premier's official residence Gono Bhaban.

The decision was taken to ensure justice to the victim's family

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Media trying to influence probe

Alleges DMP boss

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner AKM Shahidul Hoque yesterday blamed different newspapers claiming their bid to influence the investigation of Jubo League activist Ibrahim killing case.

In a written statement signed by DMP Additional Deputy Commissioner (media and community service) Walid Hossain, the DMP commissioner protested the reports published in different dailies in connection with the killing

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Graft slows down MDG progress : TI

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Government's failure to address corruption is threatening the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), warned Transparency International, global anti-corruption organisation.

It called on governments, donors and non-government organisations to adopt anti-corruption measures in all their MDG action plans in order to achieve the goals in the next five years and sustain progress beyond the 2015 timeline, said a press release.

TI's report, "The Anti-Corruption Catalyst: Realising the MDGs by 2015," demonstrates that increased transparency, accountability and integrity translate into better MDG outcomes on education, health and water, three of the eight areas targeted by the MDGs.

"Governance breakdowns and graft are considerably slowing down the progress towards the MDGs," said Huguette Labelle, chair of TI. "As we take stock, it is clear that anti-corruption and good

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BANGLADESH-INDIA JOINT VENTURE

Final agreement for Khulna plant in Oct

Bidding for similar plant in Ctg within a year

SHARIER KHAN

The joint venture between two state-owned power companies of Bangladesh and India to set up Bangladesh's largest coal-fired power plant is likely to be signed within the next three or four weeks, a top official of the Power Development Board said.

This would allow the two countries to jointly float a tender and complete the tender process within a year to construct the 1,320 megawatt power plant in Khulna at an investment ranging between \$1.5 billion and 1.8 billion.

Tender for another similar coal power project in Chittagong with the private sector is expected to be complete before that time.

The joint venture agreement would be the result of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed by Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) and Indian Thermal Power Company (NTPC) on August 31 in New Delhi.

The BPDB had then left a draft joint venture agreement with the NTPC hoping that India would give its feedback on it before the Eid holidays so that the agreement could be signed within this month.

However, India was taking extra time to review some additional Bangladeshi power related documents like the model Power

Purchase Agreement or the Implementation Agreement.

"Once they send us their feedback, which we are expecting within the next few days, we will send the draft JVA to the power and law ministries to complete the process within two more weeks," said the top official.

The managing director of the NTPC was scheduled to arrive on September 29 to sign the deal. But this schedule may be delayed by a week or so accordingly.

The draft agreement outlines equal equity between the two countries in setting up the Khulna coal power plant, equal representation of two countries in the board of directors and the modalities of financing for the project among other issues. The chairman and the managing director's position will be periodically rotated between the two nations to maintain equality.

"India will play a vital role in arranging the finances," said the source.

Through the land ministry, the power board has almost completed acquiring 1,800 acres of land for the power project opposite to the Mongla Port in Khulna. All legal procedures regarding the land are expected to be complete by December.

"We are aiming to float the tender for engineering, procurement and construction of the

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