

COMMUNICATIONS SUMMIT

Brand, communication experts share insights prior to Dhaka summit today

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HONOUR TO SALVAGE

Tigers take on Pakistan in the final ODI of the series today

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KABUL FOR INT'L HELP

Karzai asks for a decade's support after Nato pullout

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REVISITING THE FALL OF ERSHAD

Dreams come untrue

AL, BNP were quick to bury the 1990 pledges for people, turned their back on democracy for power

REZAUL KARIM

The mass upsurge that brought down the autocratic regime of HM Ershad on December 6, 1990 added yet another glorious chapter to the history of democratic movements in this country.

Twenty-one years on, the spirit that brought the nation together against a dictator has dimmed thanks to the politics of lust for power, bitterness and corruption.

The popular uprising was spearheaded by two firebrand leaders --- Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, who led the 8-party alliance and BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia, who headed the seven-party alliance. The pro-left five-party alliance also played a key role in forging political unity, a rarity in Bangladesh.

As years of anti-Ershad agitation gained momentum and appeared to reach a climax in late 1990, the three alliances formulated a historic framework pledging to oust Ershad and hold general elections under a non-party caretaker government.

The declaration galvanized the nation into shedding blood, defying curfew and bullets, resistance that finally ended the

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PHOTO: FILE

Over the years people have learnt the hard way how rare this moment in 1990 was to be. Time was when Awami League President Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia sat smiling, in camaraderie, on the same couch in the interest of democracy.

FARID HOSSAIN

A day after HM Ershad announced that he would step down, thus ending his nearly nine years of autocratic rule in 1990, I happened to be privy to a rare telephone conversation between Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia, the two women who had spearheaded the mass upsurge that ousted the dictator.

This is how it happened:

Jubilant crowds poured into the streets of the capital Dhaka when BTB in its late night bulletin flashed the news: President HM Ershad has decided to step down bowing to weeks of violent

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ERSHAD'S STATEMENT ON PAGE 2



TOFAIL AHMED

All destroyed by bad politics

RASHIDUL HASAN

Political parties have failed to turn parliament into the centre of all activities, one of the vital pledges made in the pre-polls agreement (Tin Joter Ruprekha) in 1990,

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DR KAMAL

AL, BNP ruled like Ershad

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

Dr Kamal Hossain, who played a key role in formulating the modalities of the interim government of 1990, says that the democratic spirit behind the 1990 upheaval against

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RASHED KHAN MENON

AL, BNP didn't keep promises

RASHIDUL HASAN

The autocratic mindset of the politicians is thwarting the country's progress towards democracy, more than two decades after the fall of autocratic ruler HM Ershad,

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HANNAN SHAH

AL broke '90 promises

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

BNP standing committee member Brig Gen (retd) ASM Hannan Shah has identified the serving of narrow party interests as being responsible for a non-implementation of the

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NAZMUL HUDA

All values lost from politics

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

BNP leader Nazmul Huda thinks politicians' failure to act in line with people's expectations has prevented democracy from acquiring institutional shape even in two decades

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MUJAHIDUL ISLAM SELIM

They followed Ershad policy

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

The framework of the three alliances has proved meaningless as all successive governments, including the caretaker administrations since 1991, maintained the same corrupt

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CABINET RESHUFFLED

Quader gets Abul's job

Suranjit given railway, GM Quader commerce, Faruk civil aviation, Yeafesh science, Abul ICT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a major reshuffle in the cabinet, the government yesterday replaced Syed Abul Hossain with newly sworn in Obaidul Quader as the communications minister.

Abul Hossain will now head the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) splitting the Ministry of Science and Information and Communication Technology

with State Minister Yeafesh Osman. Yeafesh will lead the Ministry of Science and Technology.

Veteran Awami League leader Suranjit Sengupta has been given the charge of the Ministry of Railways, which used to be a wing of the communications ministry till Sunday. This is the first time he became a minister.

Earlier Suranjit was the parliamentary affairs adviser to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with the

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New ministers fix priorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Suranjit Sengupta, the newly appointed railway minister, yesterday identified four challenges in his ministry and said overcoming those would be his top priority.

Obaidul Quader, who replaced Syed Abul Hossain as communications minister, said his first priority would be to begin the construction of the Padma bridge.

Giving their initial reactions after getting portfolios yesterday, both of them said they would work with honesty

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NEWS ANALYSIS

The sins of civil society

SYED BADRUL AHSAN

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina feels that some people, using the banner of civil society, have been weakening the foundations of democracy.

If that is true, it is surely a grievous fault on the part of these people and they should pay the price for such transgressions.

The head of government also has reasons to believe that against the background of 19 coups and abortive

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Tk 28/kg

Govt fixes procurement price for Aman rice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government today starts procurement of 2 lakh tonnes of Aman rice at Tk 28 a kilogram from the domestic market to provide incentives to the farmers amid continued fall in prices of both rice and paddy.

The drive will continue up to February 28 next year.

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TIPAIMUKH PROJECT BNP renews call for joint survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Reiterating its earlier demand for a joint survey on Tipaimukh dam, main opposition BNP yesterday maintained that the project on Manipur's Barak river would affect Bangladesh adversely.

The party also criticised the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for not protesting properly the Indian initiative to

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See the Sports Page for SAFF Football Championship news

WALTON It's our product

Holy Ashura today

UNB, Dhaka

Marking the 10th day of Muharram, the 1st month in the Hijri calendar, the Muslims will observe the Holy Ashura today with due religious solemnity and in a befitting manner.

The day will be observed in Bangladesh as elsewhere in the Muslim

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Holiday notice

The Daily Star office will remain closed today on the occasion of holy Ashura, and therefore there will be no issue of the newspaper tomorrow.



USUAL BUT... Two employees of Nagar Bhaban take a break on the lawn, but the unusual part of the picture is the signboard behind them that says "Nagar Bhaban Dhaka South City Corporation". The new signboard was installed yesterday following the much-talked-about DCC split.

PHOTO: STAR

Nanak moves to quell fears

Says no DCC staff to be sacked

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Staff of the now defunct Dhaka City Corporation will not be sacked; rather they will be shifted to South or North city corporations as per their choice.

Jahangir Kabir Nanak, state minister for LGRD and cooperatives, said this yesterday at a meeting at his office in the secretariat with Dhaka City Corporation Karmokarta O Kromochari Samannay Parishad that had been protesting against the split.

None of the DCC staff will lose their designation, he said. Steps would be taken to withdraw the cases filed against members of the Samannay Parishad.

He also assured leaders of the organisation that the government would consider their 12-point demand including introducing pension system, solving accommodation problem and stopping their transfer to other city corporations.

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