

**ZIA ORPHANAGE CASE
Charge framing
hearing Oct 11**

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed October 11 for charge-framing hearing against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and six others in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case.

The order came after Khaleda's lawyer, Sanaullah Mia, filed a petition seeking deferment of the hearing, stating that Khaleda was busy with the ongoing Parliament session.

The other accused are Khaleda's eldest son Tarique Rahman, former principal secretary Dr Kamal Uddin Siddique, former BNP lawmaker Kazi Salimul Haque, businessman Sharfuddin Ahmed and Momenur Rahman, nephew of BNP founder Ziaur Rahman.

Salimul and Sharfuddin were present in the court yesterday while Tarique is undergoing treatment abroad and Kamal and Momenur are on the run.

Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case with Ramna Police Station on July 3, 2009 accusing the seven of embezzling over Tk 2.10 crore by forming the "fake" trust.



A group of students take joy rides in the rain on Dhaka University campus yesterday. The photo was taken around 12:30pm.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

**Tailbacks clog
Dhaka roads**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commuters in the capital were stuck in traffic congestion for hours yesterday due to frequent VIPs' movement and a political programme.

Many traversing the Mirpur to Shahbagh, via Agargaon and Bijoy Sarani, road route complained that it took double the usual time to reach their destinations.

BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhruddin Alamgir went to former president Ziaur Rahman's grave at Chandrima Udyan at noon with a newly elected committee of pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) to offer prayers.

Scores of JCD activists arrived at the venue, causing tailbacks in the adjoining roads, stated vehicle drivers who passed the venue.

Seven new ministers also took oath at Bangabhaban yesterday and their movement might have added to the unusual tailbacks, said traffic police sources.

It took Mohammad Mainuddin, an employee of Ispahani Mirzapur Tea sales centre in Gulistan, an extra two hours to reach his workplace after boarding a bus from Kazipara around 8:00am.

"I should have reached my office at 9:30pm. It has become impossible to predict how early I should leave home," said Mainuddin.

The traffic congestion caused a lawyer, Md Shajalal, to face an embarrassing situation as his client was kept waiting for around two hours at his Judge's Court chamber in the old part of Dhaka.

"I boarded a bus from Mirpur-12 at 9:00am and should have reached my chamber at 10:30am," he said.

A private car driver, Mohammad Shawkat Hossain, said illegal parking along the route mainly causes the traffic congestion.

Bus drivers along the Mirpur-10 to Shewrapara route stop their vehicles right in the middle of the road to take passengers, giving no scope for others behind to pass, said the driver of a CNG-run autorickshaw, Humayun Kabir.

ROHINGYA ISSUE

Persecution continuing in Rakhine: US team

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A US team, which has recently visited violence-torn Rakhine state of Myanmar, yesterday said serious insecurity, tension, persecution and displacement of people continued in Rakhine and stressed access of international aid agencies to supply humanitarian assistance.

"Tension is very much evident and displacement continues. A large number of people continue to be displaced. So the challenge is very much grave there," said Kelly Clements, US deputy assistant secretary for Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

Two delegates of the four-member US team gave this impression at a press conference at American Centre. They have visited the worst affected Sittew and Mongdu areas in Rakhine state torn by June's ethnic violence.

They identified immediate humanitarian assistance as the top most priority in Rakhine.

The US team visited Myanmar on September 7-10 and Bangladesh on 11-13 to assess the current situations and hold talks

with government officials about how to reduce tension and improve humanitarian situation in the long term.

Kelly and her colleague Daniel Baer, who is deputy assistant secretary for US Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, said they talked to local leaders and victims in Arakan state as well as refugees in two camps in Cox's Bazar to get first hand impression of the situations.

Asked whether they feel that the Myanmar government has failed to address the ethnic problem, Kelly said it should be the high priority to bring the prevailing tension under control.

For a long-term solution, she said understanding between communities (Rohingya Muslims and Buddhists), reconciliation and reintegration were needed so that they could return to their homes.

On Bangladesh government's call to international community to invest in Rakhine state to create livelihood for the people to stop Rohingya influx into Bangladesh, Kelly said one of our impressions was that improving livelihood and economic development were some of the challenges.

BCL ATTACK ON JCD

DU forms probe body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka University authorities yesterday formed an eight-member committee to investigate Monday's attack on Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists by Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) men on the university campus.

The probe body headed by DU Pro-Vice Chancellor (Admin) Prof Shahid Akhtar Hossain was asked to submit a report within the next four weeks.

A group of Chhatra League activists attacked the Chhatra Dal men, injuring seven of them, when they entered the campus to call on Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique.

In another development, the DU syndicate approved Tk 2 lakh to the family of Towhid Zaman, a second year student of international relations department of the university, who was killed in a road accident at the capital's Shahbagh intersection on August 28.

Youth held for trying to rob bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested a youth with a fake pistol and a fake bomb on charge of threatening a bank manager to kill him in Dhanmondi area of the capital yesterday.

The youth Ashraf Islam Akash, 26, a dweller of Hazaribag slum, went to the manager of Islami Bank's Satmasjid road branch around 11:45am.

Rukan Uddin, the manager, said showing a pistol and a bomb in a bag, Akash told him that he is in need of Tk 60,000.

Akash said his sister has been kidnapped recently and the kidnapers told him that they would release his sister if he gives them the money, he added.

Later, Rukan informed police of the matter.

Anwarul Islam, sub-inspector of Dhanmondi Police Station, said police rushed to the bank and captured him with the pistol and bomb which, later, were discovered as fake ones.

Police are examining whether Akash's sister was kidnapped, the SI said.

Next polls must be held under caretaker govt

Say eminent citizens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The next general election should be held under a non-partisan caretaker government, whatever the format might be, to make it fair and credible, some eminent citizens said at a roundtable yesterday.

It is not possible to hold a fair election keeping the incumbent parliament active as required by provisions added through the latest constitutional amendment, said former election commissioner M Sakhawat Hossain.

He also suggested revising the Election Commission rules, saying there were many loopholes in them.

Talking about Awami League and BNP, he said, "According to my observations and casting of votes, 67 percent of the total voters support the two parties. The remaining 33 percent voters are flexible."

The roundtable titled "Present socio-economic-political crisis: Way forward" was organised by Nagarik Oikyo, a platform of citizens, at Jatiya Press Club.

The speakers stressed the need for a civic alliance comprising civil society members and progressive politicians to act as a pres-

sure group to overcome the current socio-economic-political crises and maintain healthy politics.

Presenting the keynote paper, eminent law expert Dr Shahdeen Malik said, "If the national election is held under a partisan government, it will not be acceptable and the government will not survive more than six months."

"The people's faith in the two major political parties has fallen to the lowest level. This faithlessness has created the ground for a new political party to emerge," he said.

A law professor at Dhaka University Asif Nazrul said, "Given the present political circumstances, there is a demand for a third party in Bangladesh. If it can be formed, we will come up with intellectual support."

Regarding speculations that Nagarik Oikyo will participate in the next general polls and announce candidates in 300 constituencies, the organisation's convenor Mahmudur Rahman Manna said, "This is a platform of citizens. If qualified citizens want to contest the poll individually and we will support them from our organisation. It will not be an offence."

Media should play stronger role in HIV/AIDS awareness

Discussion told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The media should play a stronger role in creating awareness of HIV/AIDS among mass people, as it is the easiest and most powerful way to reach people from all walks of life, speakers said at a discussion in Chittagong yesterday.

They said media's role in creating awareness is not up to the mark but they are expected to be more efficient in this regard.

They were speaking at a media dialogue "Orientation of the media persons on HIV/AIDS" organised by Modhumita Project, an organisation working with HIV/AIDS patients, held at Regional Public Administration Training Centre.

Referring to a 2011 data of UNAIDS, the speakers said although the country's sex workers and their clients are most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, the number of them actually affected by the virus is substantially less than others.

Sex workers constitute only 2.7 percent of total affected whereas migrants, who top the list, make up 31 percent of HIV positive.

On media role, they said news concerning HIV/AIDS is not well treated by media and even the news items that are published are devalued and not up to standard.

Saying media plays a large role in changing mindset of people, they urged journalists to assist in eradicating discrimination against HIV/AIDS patients.

**Income Tax Day
A Day to go...**