Pranab greets President Abdul Hamid

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Indian President Pranab Mukherjee has congratulated new Bangladeshi President Abdul Hamid.

"I take this opportunity to reiterate the high importance that India attaches to its relations with Bangladesh and our commitment to developing these further in all areas of mutual interest," Pranab said in a message yesterday.

He said this recalling his meeting with Hamid

Ctg-Bankok flight soon: Thai envoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Thai Ambassador to Bangladesh Madhurapochana Ittarong yesterday said necessary steps are being taken to start Chittagong-Bankok flight within few months.

She was addressing a meeting with the directors of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) at its office in Chittagong city CCCI President Mahbubul Alam also spoke,

14-party's mourning procession today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

said a press release.

Ruling Awami League-led 14-party alliance will bring out a procession today to mourn the death in Rana Plaza building collapse in Savar. The procession will start at 4:00pm from the

south gate of Baitul Mokarram National Mosque and end at Suhrawardy Udyan's Sikha Chiranton after parading different city streets.

The decision came at a meeting at AL central office in the capital's Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday with AL Presidium Member Mohammad Nasim in the chair.

BNP's hartal in Sylhet city called off

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

BNP Sylhet city unit yesterday withdrew tomorrow's hartal called in the city to press home their demand for tracing the missing leader M Ilias Ali.

At a meeting, the decision was made as the party's countrywide procession programme with black flags has also been scheduled for Tuesday and BNP-led 18-party alliance has called another hartal for May 2, said BNP Sylhet city President MA



UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at a few places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rangpur and Rajshahi divisions in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Mild heat wave is sweeping over the regions of Rajshahi, Jessore and Kushtia and it may continue, Met Office said.

Day and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:26pm and rises tomorrow at 5:25am.

Country's highest temperature 38.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday

at Chuadanga and lowest 19.9 degrees at Srimangal.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Humidity in Temperature in Celsius percentage Morning **Evening** Max: 32.7 22.8 Dhaka 31.0 Chittagong 21.2 37.4 Rajshahi 25.0 75 71 27.6 22.0 Rangpur 89 81 64 Khulna 35.6 26.5 71 33.8 25.3 Barisal

Sit for talks

US envoy urges political parties STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Saying that political violence is unacceptable, US Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan W Mozena last night urged the major political parties to sit for a constructive dialogue to resolve political crisis.

He made the remark after he met BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in the party's Gulshan office. Holding a dialogue will be easy since the party leaders knew each other, said Mozena, adding that nobody had the right to perpetrate violence against police or anyone else while it was the government's duty to secure people's lives.

The government should ensure space for political parties to express their views, he said.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina consoles a female victim of the Savar building collapse at **National Institute** of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation in the capital yesterday.

РНОТО: PID

SAVAR COLLAPSE CASE IN COURT

Life term now possible imprisonment), 338 (two years' imprison-

COURT CORRESPONDENT

In order to bring the maximum punishment to life term (30 years), a Dhaka court yesterday allowed police to include more sections of existing laws into a case filed over the deaths in the Savar building collapse.

The previous sections of the case allowed a maximum punishment of five years' jail for those convicted of being negligent and causing the deaths. A second case has also been filed over the collapse.

"The perpetrators can also be punished with death," Advocate ABM Sharfuddin Khan Mukul told The Daily Star yesterday.

"It must be proven that the workers

were forced to work in a building, declared risky before the collapse, and that this had led to their deaths," said the expert on criminal law. In this context, the investigation officer,

based on the probe, has to bring murder charges against the owners of Rana Plaza and the factories housed in it, he said.

Earlier, police filed the case over the deaths under Sections 337 (six months'

ment) and 304 (A) (five years' imprisonment) of the Penal Code. The new order allowed Sections 323

(one years' imprisonment), 324 (three years' imprisonment), 325 (seven years imprisonment), 326 and 307 (ten years imprisonment) and 304 (life term) to be be declared illegal. added to the case. Senior Judicial Magistrate Wasim

Sheikh passed the order following an appeal by Investigation Officer Kaiser Matobber. Meanwhile, in the hearing on another

petition, the same court placed Aminul Islam, owner of Phantom Apparels Ltd and Phantom Tack Ltd, housed in the building, on an 11-day remand in connection with the cases. Sub-inspector Kaiser Matobber of

Savar Police Station produced Aminul before the court and appealed for a 14-day remand. Detective Branch of police arrested Aminul in the capital's Ramna on added. Saturday.

The nine-storey Rana Plaza collapsed on April 24, leaving at least 377 people dead and over 2,000 injured.

SUPPLYING MRP BOOKLETS

HC questions govt's preference for UK firm

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain in two weeks why its recommendation to appoint a British company to supply 15 million machine readable passport (MRP) booklets should not

The rule was issued acting on an April 4 writ petition stating that De La Rue was a fraud company and had a record of poor performance and fraudulence practice and should not be awarded the contract.

Barrister M Mutaher Hossain, appearing for the petitioners, told The Daily Star yesterday that the company's tender submission letter gave an undertaking of not having any record of poor performance, supply abandonment and non-completion of contract. However, it failed to mention about a UK probe into

the company and suspension of its banknote supply contract in India, he said. Clause 4.3B of the tender document defined "fraudu-

lence practice" as misrepresentation or omission of facts. The tender, based on this, can be rejected, he

The home secretary, inspector general of police, Department of Immigration and Passports director general, De La Rue and eight other government officials were made respondents to the rule.

PM visits injured victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reassured the injured victims of the building collapse in Savar that the government would take care of their treatment.

At least 371 people have been killed and several thousand hurt as Rana Plaza, a nine-storey building that housed five garment factories on its top floors, caved in on Wednesday.

The premier offered the reassurance while visiting the injured at National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation, popularly known as Pangu Hospital, and Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

She donated Tk 10,000 and a sari or lungi to each of the victims who are now receiving treatment at the hospitals.

two hospitals, the PM enquired about the treatment and well-being of the wounded, Abul Kalam Azad, press secretary to the PM, told The Daily Star. Hasina went to the

During her visits to the

Pangu Hospital around 11:00am and talked to the injured and the doctors there for about half an hour. She instructed the doctors to treat them properly. Later she visited the

wounded at the DMCH.

The premier has directed the officials concerned to provide artificial arms and legs for the injured if necessary, Health Minister AFM Ruhal Haque told reporters after her departure from the DMCH.

She has also directed that a plan be prepared for providing the wounded with jobs after their recovery, noted the health minis-

SUSPENSION OF PROTHOM ALO REPORTER

Sust journos fast for reinstatement

SUST CORRESPONDENT

Journalists of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (Sust) yesterday observed a token hunger strike to press home a 6-point demand including withdrawal of the decision to suspend the Prothom Alo university correspondent over a corruption report.

They fasted from 2:00pm till 5:00pm yesterday and announced that they would observe another 3-hour hunger strike from 2:00pm today.

The university administration suspended Misbah Uddin, a fourth year student of computer science and engineering department, on April 22, the same day that his report regarding corruption at Sust was published in the Bangla daily Prothom Alo.

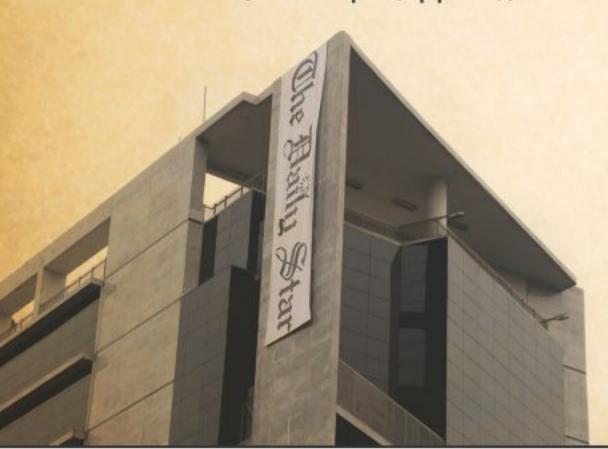
Sust Vice-Chancellor (additional charge) Prof Elias Uddin said some teachers pressurised him to suspend Misbah.

Leaders and activists of different organisations of the university expressed solidarity with the journalists' demands.

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