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Your Right to Know

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RISKS TO ECONOMY

German envoy says shutdowns, bad factory conditions may hurt growth

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CYCLONE PREPAREDNESS

Unicef representative lauds efforts by govt and humanitarian partners

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DURAND LINE DISPUTE

Karzai seeks Indian military aid amid border row with Pakistan

PAGE 8

Prospect

Signing Ticfa not so soon

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

The prospects of Bangladesh retaining the generalised system of preferences in the US market are bleak, according to Commerce Minister GM Quader.

"After the Rana Plaza collapse, expecting a positive result from the USTR hearing has become difficult," Quader told The Daily Star yesterday.

"I cannot exactly say whether the outcome will be positive," he said.

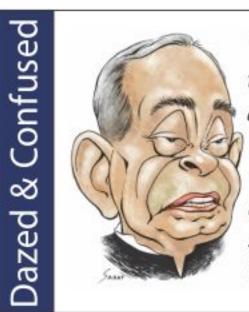
But US Ambassador Dan W Mozena relayed a "grim" feedback from the United States Trade Representative, according to Quader.

Mozena held a meeting with the minister yesterday at the latter's secretariat in Dhaka.

USTR, the body SEE PAGE 2 COL 3 POLITICAL MEETINGS, RALLIES

of GSP very bleak Ban or no ban? angrily STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Conflicting versions, statements of two ministers kick up confusion, uproar



"No meeting or demo for indefinite period in Dhaka to avert anarchy!" MK Alamgir

"Ban on political meeting across country for a month for smooth relief operations!" **Syed Ashraf**



"I am unaware of such a decision!" **IGP HM Khandker**

"No circular has been issued on such one-month ban!" Home secretary **Mustaq Ahmed**



the reasons for such an unprecedented: party would be allowed to move and the law that allowed it to ; hold any rally and public impose the ban.

For his part, LGRD Minister Syed : month so as to maintain Ashraful Islam, who is the ruling : law and order and prevent Awami League general secretary, said · subversive activities from the ban had been imposed across the . taking place. country for the sake of smooth relief: The BNP-Jamaat-led 18and rehabilitation activities in the party alliance said it would cyclone Mahasen-ravaged districts.

"It is not possible to protect the : action plan against such people's fundamental rights like meet- : "fascist attitude". ings and rallies when the country is hit . The government, however, did not by any natural disaster," Ashraf said: party's standing committee SEE PAEG 2 COL 4

Parties react

The main opposition BNP and other political parties · have strongly denounced · the conflicting statements of two ministers on banining all kinds of political meetings and rallies for a . month.

Political parties and civil · society members described the move as undemocratic and unconstitutional, and demanded its immediate withdrawal.

The criticisms came hours after Home Minister Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir · yesterday said no political · meeting for the next one

· come up with a befitting

"We may hold the SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

RANA PLAZA TRAGEDY Double blow for a mother

MORSHED ALI KHAN

For Hazera Khatun, the news of the Rana Plaza collapse in Savar meant making urgent arrangements to go there, from her home in Kotchadpur village in Jhenidah. Hazera's daughter Maya Rani worked in the building. With no news of her daughter, Hazera endured the agonising wait at Adhar Chandra High School, which

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Hazera Khatun is now looking for her two-and-ahalf-year-old granddaughter. Her daughter, the child's mother, died in the Rana Plaza disaster.

STAR REPORT

Two top ministers' conflicting statements over the government's "banning" political rallies and meetings have triggered widespread confusion and criticism. Home Minister Muhiuddin Khan

Alamgir had categorically said that no meeting or demonstration would be permitted for one month, Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS), the state-run news agency, reported at 5:19pm yesterday.

"We give permission for peaceful

safeguard life and property," he said while inaugurating Jurarganj Police Station in Mirsarai upazila of Chittagong around noon in the day. But speaking to BBC Bangla service in the evening, the home minister, however, said the ban had been imposed in the capital for an indefinite

issue any order to this effect specifying

meetings but the opposition parties

engage in violence and disrupt law and

order. So no meeting will be permitted

in the next one month in order to

SHAKHAWAT LITON

History is known to repeat, but some- : STAFF CORRESPONDENT times it repeats in an unbelievable

The ruling Awami League central · Zia has said the dialogue : working committee at a meeting on : between the government Friday with party chief Sheikh Hasina in ; and the opposition would · the chair reaffirmed that the next parlia- : be "affected" by the govern-: mentary election would be held under : ment's "ban" on holding : an interim government composed of : rallies for a month. elected representatives.

And whatever its name, Hasina, the · when a delegation of SEE PAGE 2 COL 3:

Latest govt

: Khaleda tells EU delegates

: BNP Chairperson Khaleda

She made the comment SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BHERAMARA POWER TENDER Unusual conditions

raise questions SHARIER KHAN

bidders for a large power project involving a few hundred million dollars, the Northwest Power Generation Company Ltd (NWPGC) has fixed some very unusual conditions that suit only one particular Japanese bidder.

While preparing tender evaluation criteria for selecting

According to several bidders participating in the tender for setting up a gas-fired 450 MW power plant, the NWPGC has formulated tender evaluation criteria where the proposed plant's life has been fixed at 30 years whereas all other power projects in the country are based on a plant life of 20

"This will artificially increase plant life to get financial incumbent prime minister, will be its: ambassadors called on her benefit of higher plant output and efficiency," said an expert

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Editor

The Baily Star

Polls-time govt NEWS ANALYSIS minus Hasina? Politics back move to hurt talks AL toys with the idea

period.

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

The ruling Awami League might be agreeable to forming an interim government headed by a lawmaker other than : manner. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to oversee the next parliamentary elections.

Several ministers and leaders of the AL had earlier said Hasina would lead the polls-time government.

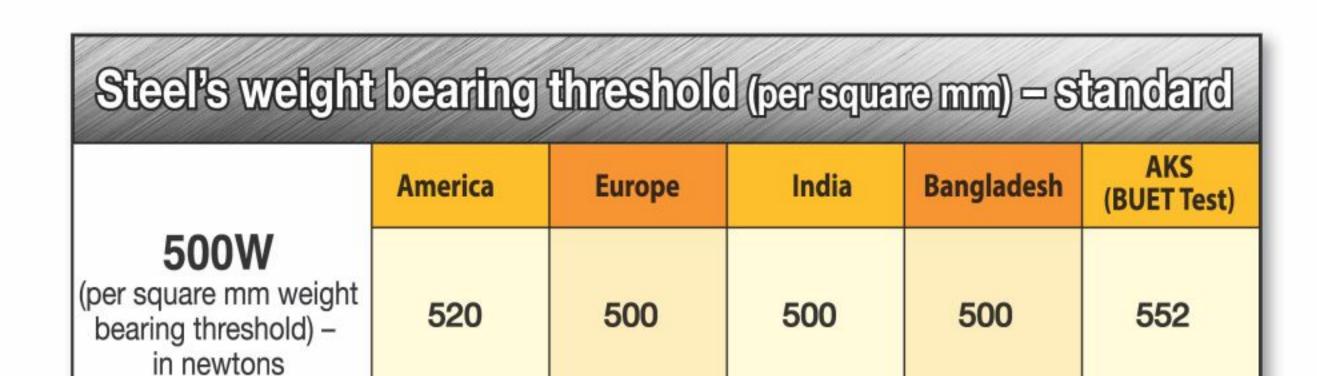
"The prime minister has said she will be ready to sacrifice a lot if the main opposition BNP joins the interim government," a top policymaker of the ruling party told The Daily Star.

According to AL insiders, this means a ruling party lawmaker is likely to lead the interim government.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4 ·

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