

Prime agenda must

FROM PAGE 3
BNP's Naya Paltan central office in the capital.

"The talks [between AL and BNP chief] must be held on how to hold a free and fair election under a non-partisan administration. Otherwise, the government's call for compromise and dialogue won't be credible to the country's people," he said.

Fakhrul also questioned the government's sincerity for reaching a compromise over the election through a dialogue because of the administration's "ongoing oppressive acts".

The people will resort to the path of united resistance to face the government's "repressive acts, attacks and terrorism", he added.

Fakhrul, however, thanked the premier for her Saturday's phone call to opposition leader Khaleda Zia, expressing hope that the opposition alliance sponsored 60-hour hartal would not hamper the dialogue initiative.

Charge framing hearing

FROM PAGE 5

Appealed to the court to start hearing on charge framing against the rest accused except Khaleda. But the court did not allow the prosecutor to place their submission.

Court sources said the opposition leader had been absent from the court on different excuses.

ZIA CHARITABLE TRUST GRAFT CASE
In the case, the three other accused are Harris Chowdhury, Khaleda's former political secretary; Ziaul Islam Munna, assistant private secretary (APS) of Harris; and Monirul Islam Khan, APS of former DCC mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka.

Of them, Harris is absconding while the rest two appeared before the court.

EC yet to finalise

FROM PAGE 3

hope to complete it within this week," Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad told reporters at the EC Secretariat yesterday.

"In the code of conduct, we will mention issues including when we will start exercising our authority, how we will restrict activities of political parties, and how a level-playing field will be ensured," he said.

As per the constitution, the 10th parliamentary election is to be held from October 27 to January 25.

Replying to a query on why the EC is late in amending the code of conduct, the CEC said, "Frankly speaking, we waited for a consensus among major political par-

"We are ready to hold the dialogue at anytime and anywhere after the hartal is over on October 29," he said.

"Honourable prime minister phoned the BNP chairperson at the eleventh hour so it was not possible for us to withdraw the hartal," added the BNP spokesperson.

Fakhrul added that the opposition alliance would finalise its next course of action depending on the government's attitude centring the talks.

Hasina, during the phone call to Khaleda, had invited her to Gono Bhaban, the official residence of the prime minister, tonight for talks on holding the next parliamentary election.

Fakhrul claimed that three opposition men were killed in firings and attacks by the law enforcers and ruling party activists during the first day of hartal.

Still in effect

FROM PAGE 3
Matia said Hasina had asked Khaleda why she celebrated her birthday on August 15, the day in 1975 when a group of disgruntled army officers assassinated her father and most of her family members.

"The prime minister told her that it hurts her feelings when Khaleda cut cakes on August 15," said Matia. But Khaleda replied "Why? Is not anybody born on 15 August?", Matia quoted Khaleda as saying.

On Khaleda's claim that her red phone was out of order, Matia said, "Even the phone technicians have said that the claim was not true."

She also condemned Saturday's attack on journalists and media houses.

RMG workers

FROM PAGE 5
factory at about noon. Hearing the rumour, the incensed workers vandalised the factory and beat up the managers.

He said on information, police rushed to the spot around 3:00pm, dispersed the workers and sent the two managers to a local hospital.

Manager Shohel Rana said some workers had ransacked the factory before Eidul Azha demanding an increase in their wages.

Later, those workers were sacked as per regulations, he said, adding that they and their relatives, who still work in the factory, might be the ones spreading the rumour.

President leaves

FROM PAGE 5
opening session of the forum at 10:20am on Tuesday.

He will attend luncheon to be hosted by Prime Minister of Malaysia Najib Tun Abdul Razak in honour of the participating heads of state and government and attend the dinner to be hosted by the Prince of Wales on Tuesday.

The president will exchange pleasantries with the Bangladeshi community at Westminster Methodist Central Hall in UK at 4:00pm on Wednesday.

On the sideline of the forum, the president is expected to meet the heads of state and government.

The theme of the forum is "Changing World, New Relationships" to sum up the emergence of new economic linkages between nations across borders, religions and cultures in a fast changing world.

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