



# The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

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## DORIS LESSING DIES

Tributes pour in for the visionary, feminist icon and Nobel laureate

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## BLACK SABBATH'S TRIPLE WIN

The heavy metal band sweeps Classic Rock Roll of Honour

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## WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

LIFE style

# Hasina leans on JP for 'credible' polls

8 new ministers take oath; job distribution, fate of old ones to be disclosed today

SHAKHAWAT LITON and PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The prime minister yesterday inducted five Jatiya Party leaders into her cabinet and appointed another as her adviser, in a clear manifestation of banking on former military dictator Ershad's party to overcome the crisis centring on the election.

Through this, Sheikh Hasina has begun forming the polls-time government that has eight members so far.

Two of the other three are from the Awami League and one from the Workers Party.

Earlier in the day, the JP quit the AL-led grand alliance and announced that it would contest the general election independently.

Asked to comment on the development, an AL presidium member termed it most natural. "Nothing has happened out of the blue. What has happened was to happen."

The new ministers, however, were not given their portfolios because the process of forming the polls-time cabinet is not over yet. Hasina has yet to finalise the names of ministers who will remain in the

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Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad talks to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina after the oath taking of six ministers and two state ministers for a polls-time cabinet at the Bangabhaban yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT TODAY Khaleda to urge him to weigh in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will meet President Abdul Hamid at the Bangabhaban this evening to discuss the present political crisis.

She will lead a 20-member delegation of the BNP-led 18-party alliance, party's acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir told journalists last night.

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## Secretariat dates with confusion

M ABUL KALAM AZAD and PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The Secretariat had a different atmosphere yesterday as many ministers and state ministers were busy signing off, while some of their colleagues skipped work due to confusion over their status.

Most of them spent time signing files and talking to officials. They exchanged greetings and thanked each other.

Many ministers were seen watching television news to learn the latest developments in the political arena. Some

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## Go for talks, immediately

US official stresses urgency as polls-time cabinet formed

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Assistant Secretary of State Nisha Desai Biswal sees talks as an even more urgent priority now that an interim cabinet has been announced.

"The announcement of interim cabinet simply underscores the urgency for a dialogue to take place immediately to determine the way forward for peaceful, free, fair and credible election," she said at a pre-departure press conference.

Biswal said the United States would like to see a peaceful and fair election in Bangladesh. For that, it will work with the United Nations and the international community and lend support in whatever way it could.

"The development in the recent hours made even more urgent the need for

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Nisha Desai Biswal



## JP QUILTS ALLIANCE, JOINS POLLS-TIME GOVT Ershad now asks BNP to follow suit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party has finally quit the Awami League-led grand alliance and joined the "all-party" polls-time government yesterday.

Making a U-turn on his previous decision, JP Chairman HM Ershad also announced that his party will contest the next general election.

"I want to declare at this moment that we are no more with the grand alliance. We are participating in the all-party polls-time government," he told a press conference at his Banani office.

The former military ruler urged the main opposition BNP to join

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## It will not end ongoing crisis

Some civil society members react to formation of polls-time govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political analysts and academics yesterday gave mixed reactions to the formation of the polls-time cabinet and suggested an immediate dialogue between the major political parties.

Some of them said the interim cabinet

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## NEWS ANALYSIS

## Govt's authority remains as it is

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The election-time government formed yesterday through reshuffling of the cabinet will have no limitation on its powers and functions. The constitution allows it to work unhindered and it will be able to make any policy decision that could even influence the election.

And Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who reshuffled her cabinet, retains the power to hire and fire any member of the "polls-time cabinet", as she could hire anyone and ask

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## TARGET FREE POLLS

Newly-appointed six ministers and two state ministers yesterday expressed their commitment to ensuring that the upcoming national election is held in a free, fair and credible manner. The Daily Star talked to them after they took an oath of office.



AMIR HOSSAIN AMU

Politicians have the responsibility to lead the nation in the right direction, said Amir Hossain Amu, an advisory council member of the ruling

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TOFAIL AHMED

The main responsibility of the polls-time government is to oversee the parliamentary election that has to be free and fair, said Tofail Ahmed who is also

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RASHED KHAN MENON

"I have sworn an oath with the challenge of overseeing a free, fair and credible election and hope that we [the new ministers and state

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ANISUL ISLAM MAHMUD

Jatiya Party Presidium Member Anisul Islam Mahmud described the present situation as "hard time".

Anisul, who had been

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RAWSHAN ERSHAD

Jatiya Party Presidium Member Rawshan Ershad said she hoped that all the political parties would participate in the election and that it would be free and fair.

## LABOUR UNREST CONTINUES 2 killed in Gazipur as RMG workers clash with cops

OUR CORRESPONDENTS, Gazipur and Savar

Two garment workers were killed and at least 50 injured in a clash between workers and cops at Kashimpur of Gazipur yesterday afternoon.

The dead are Badsha Mia, 25, and Ruma Akter, 22, of GMS Composite Knitting Industries Ltd in Sardaganj of Kashimpur industrial belt.

The clash ensued when several thousand workers went berserk at the factory after a factory official allegedly beat up a female worker.

Meanwhile, labour unrest continued yesterday in Ashulia and Savar over the minimum wage as garment workers took to the streets and clashed with police, leaving at least 52 people injured.

Over 100 garment factories in the area suspended their production for the day.

GAZIPUR  
Witnesses said a production manager of GMS Composite beat up the female worker of the sewing section around 12:30pm, prompting demonstrations by fellow workers at the factory.

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## BNF gets EC registration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission has finally registered the much-talked-about political party Bangladesh Nationalist Front and gave it "television" as its electoral symbol.

"As the party has fulfilled all the requirements, we have registered it. I think there will be no more debate on the party's registration because its symbol does not look similar to any other party's electoral symbol," Election Commissioner Shah Nawaz told reporters.

BNF applied to the commission for registration in October last year, and it was initially selected by the commission a few months later. But the party came under criticism after it sought "sheaf of wheat" as its symbol, which many believed could be confused

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