

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	KHULNA	BARISAL	RANGPUR	COX'S BAZAR
	H 29.6 L 28.8	H 26.0 L 25.1	H 33.2 L 27.1	H 31.0 L 28.7	H 27.7 L 27.2	H 26.4 L 25.5	H 35.5 L 28.7	H 26.0 L 24.2

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged and night temperature may fall by 1-3 degree Celsius over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:26pm and rises tomorrow at 5:37am. Country's highest temperature 37.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Tentulia and the lowest 23.4 in Teknaf.

US in talks over anti-terror 'help package'
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United States has begun hectic negotiations with the government on an "assistance package" over countering terrorism and violent extremism.

"We have been refining our package and figuring out what we are going to provide. First of all what your government agencies need," US Ambassador in Dhaka Marcia Bernicat told reporters yesterday after meetings with Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali and Secretary Md Shahidul Haque.

Bernicat said there were three prescribed talks ahead and security dialogue was something they were tracking. "Again, there's no single point on the agenda. There're so many aspects of security cooperation..." she said while responding to a question on the upcoming fifth security dialogue to be held in Dhaka likely in October.

Diplomatic sources said they would discuss ways to further strengthen security cooperation.

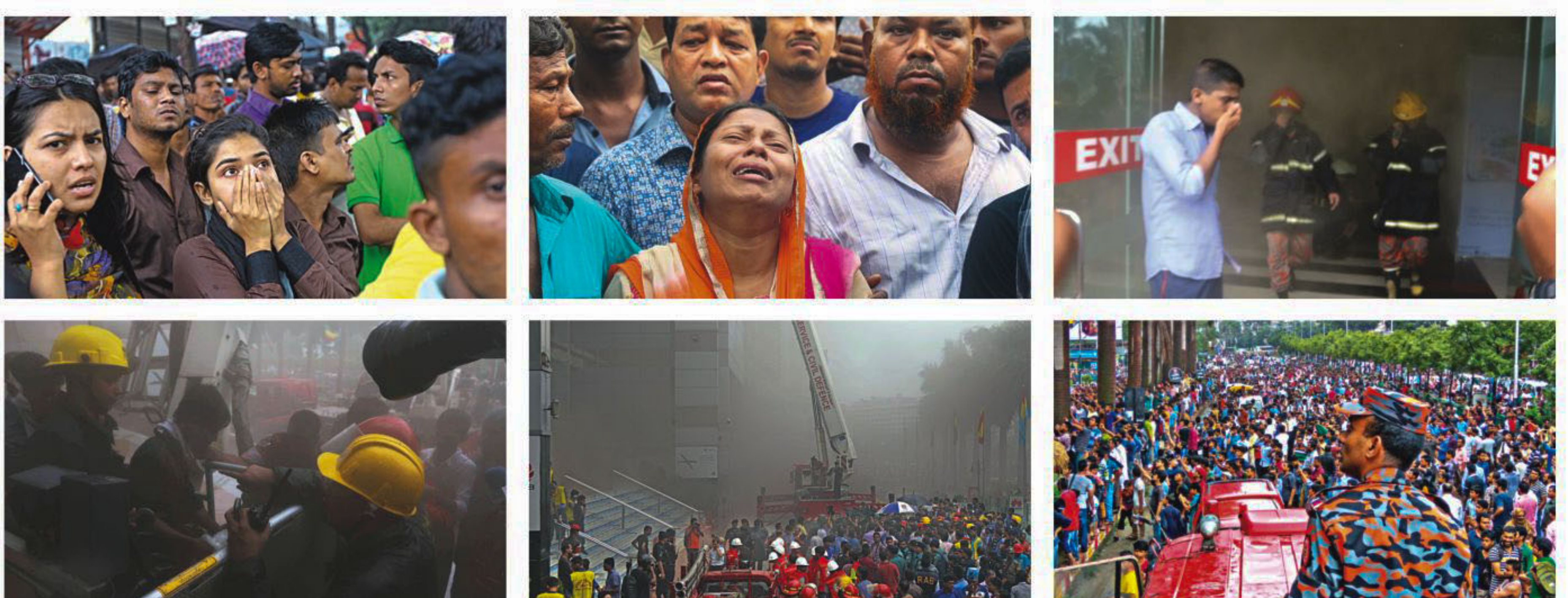
Zafrullah slams Khaleda for democracy's absence in BNP
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-BNP intellectual and Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Zafrullah Chowdhury in an open letter lambasted BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia "for absence of democracy inside the party" and gave some suggestions.

In the letter sent to the media yesterday, he warned she had only nine months to strengthen movements to establish "accountable



FIRE SMOKE TRIGGERS TEARS OF LOSS



(Clockwise from top) Smoke rises from the Bashundhara City shopping mall around 3:00pm from a fire allegedly erupting around 11:00am yesterday. Between 1:00pm and 2:00pm, firefighters worked inside the premises while a sea of people continued to look on from the road in front, firefighters put ladders in use, evacuees were brought down, shop employees reeled from the scenes unfolding before them and this shop owner was found to be in despair. PHOTOS: AMRAN HOSSAIN, PALASH KHAN, PRABIR DAS

UNITY CALL Khaleda acting as nat'l leader, not alliance's
Says Mirza Fakhru
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There is no link between BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's call to forge national unity against militancy and the BNP-led 20-party alliance as she made the call as a national leader, said Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday.

He was addressing a two-hour meeting of the alliance chiefs presided over by Khaleda at her Gulshan office, one of them told The Daily Star.

The course of action against Rampal power plant and possible price hike of gas were also discussed. Leaders said Khaleda may announce programmes before going for Hajj.

The sources said some of the chiefs told Khaleda about their confusion over the unity, as Krishak Sramik Janata League President Kader Siddique had made some comments after a meeting with Khaleda.

On hearing Fakhru, the chiefs supported Khaleda's initiative, they said.

On relations with Jamaat-e-Islami, a component leader said Jamaat is a factor for politics but a barrier to national unity, they added.

Khaleda kept mum but said, "National unity is necessary for welfare of the country. Besides, we have to look upon other issues."

She suggested Jamaat's representative Abdul Halim to present documents of Awami League and Jamaat leading movements together.

Several leaders confirmed that Khaleda told them that BNP would not bring any change to the alliance after forging the unity.

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