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Obstacles defied, BNP rally peaceful

At Khulna gathering, Fakhrul says AL won't even get 10 seats in free, fair polls

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA *and* DIPANKAR ROY, *from Khulna*

The BNP rally in Khulna was largely peaceful with reports of some incidents of vandalism and activists of the BNP and Awami League chasing each other.

The tension was palpable in the air as groups of ruling AL activists stood at the entrances to the city with sticks and sharp weapons throughout the day. Besides, there was a transport strike on the roads and rivers for two days ahead of the event.

While the rally was still going on, the Khulna BNP office on KD Ghosh Road was set on fire allegedly by ruling party men.

But thousands of BNP supporters still made it to the rally at Dak Bungalow Intersection.

"You people have made the impossible possible. I salute you," BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said at the rally in the aftrenoon.

If the coming election were to be held under a caretaker administration, the ruling Awami League would not even be able to win 10 seats in the parliament, he said.

"People will not accept anything but a caretaker government. Why don't you want to accept this demand? Because you know that you will become nonexistent...," he said, addressing the government.

The Awami League government has turned Bangladesh into a hell to be able to stay in power without people's votes.

Meanwhile, Bus and launch services resumed in the region soon after the rally ended in the evening.

BNP standing committee member Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain said corruption by the government put the country's economy at stake. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina should answer why load-shedding "returned from the museum".

Another standing committee member Goyeshwar Chandra Roy said over 200 BNP activists were arrested over the Khulna rally.

BNP Vice Chairman Abdul Awal Mintoo said the anti-government movement just started and it wouldn't stop until the AL government is ousted.

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Overcoming obstacles on the way to the venue, thousands of people gather for the BNP rally at Dak Bungalow intersection in Khulna city yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Roads still not disciplined

Says Quader frustrated over partial implementation of transport act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday expressed serious discontent with the authorities' failure to fully implement the Road Transport Act-2022 and the long delay in formulating the rules for the act.

Hinting at corruption in development projects, the minister directed his ministry's secretary to identify the corrupt persons and take actions against them to make the ministry corruption free.

Quader, who has been at the helm of the ministry for around 11 years, lamented that discipline could

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DIGITAL SECURITY ACT

Govt trying to remove room for abuse

Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said the Digital Security Act-2018 was misused and abused in certain cases in 2019, before the pandemic.

"We are trying to plug the holes where there is scope for abuse and misuse.

"We are still discussing the good practices [of the law] with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human

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'Ensure gas supply, we'll pay more'

Textile industry leaders urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Textile mill owners yesterday said they were willing to shell out 40 percent more for gas if the supply was uninterrupted. Supply disruptions were costing the industry crores of taka, they said.

Spinning, weaving, dyeing, finishing and sizing facility owners currently pay Tk 16.33 for each million cubic feet of gas.

"We are ready to pay Tk 22.83 or 40 percent more per unit of gas to keep the mills running," Mohammad Ali Khokon, president of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA), told a press conference at a hotel in the capital.

Since March, the industry has lost orders worth $1 billion because of disruption in production caused by gas shortage, he said.

After July, production in the mills fell to 60 percent, he added.

The BTMA currently has 1,700 members who invested about $16 billion in the sector, Khokon said.

Textile mills in many areas of Narayanganj, Madhabdi, Ashulia, Savar, Gazipur, Sreepur, Bhaluka, Chattogram and Cumilla can now operate for only 12 hours a day because of poor gas supplies.

Many entry- and mid-level mills are on the verge of closure, he added.

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New Zealand pacer Tim Southee (2nd from R) celebrates with teammates after dismissing Australia opener David Warner (not in picture) during the first Super 12 fixture of the Twenty20 World Cup at the Sydney Cricket Ground yesterday. The Kiwis bowled the defending champions out for 111 runs to register an 89-run victory. PHOTO: AFP

Daraz যা চাই দারাজে পাই

NZ stun Aussies, England cruise

AGENCIES

Devon Conway scored a brilliant unbeaten 92 as New Zealand thrashed champions Australia by 89 runs in a rematch of last year's final, opening the Super 12 stage with a bang at the Twenty20 World Cup on Saturday.

Expatriate New Zealanders turned out in numbers at a packed Sydney Cricket Ground and were treated to fireworks from the Black Caps batters as they blasted their way to 200 for three in their 20 overs after Conway smashed the final ball for a six.

Seamer Tim Southee struck early to remove David Warner and took three for six as the New Zealand bowlers kept up a relentless pressure to dismiss the hosts for 111 in the 18th over.

It was Australia's biggest loss in a T20

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CHINA COMMUNIST PARTY'S CONGRESS

Xi solidifies control

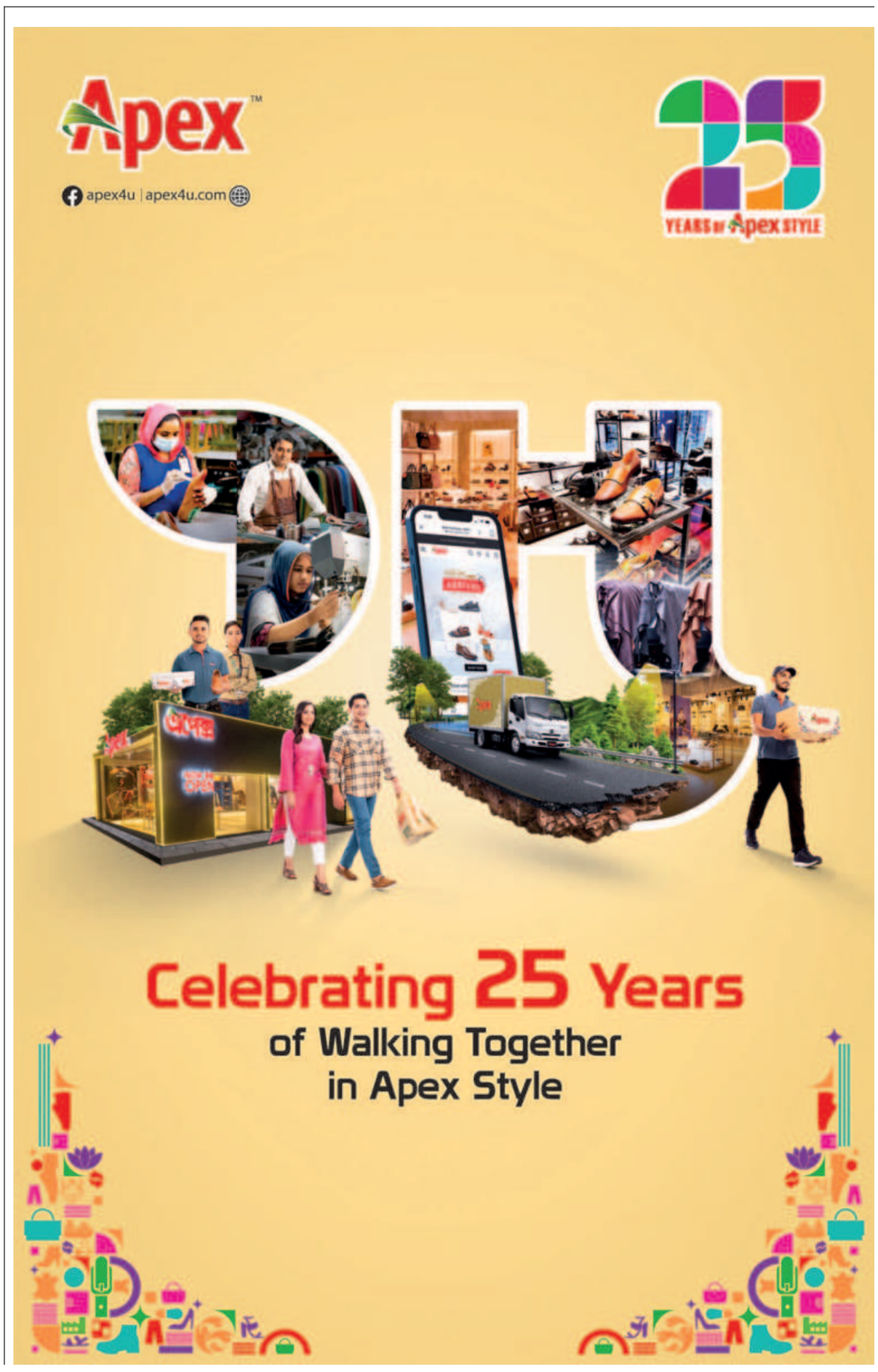
Opposition to Taiwan's independence enshrined into China's constitution

AFP, *Beijing*

Chinese President Xi Jinping was all set for a historic third term in power as the Communist Party's Congress ended yesterday, but the dramatic removal of his predecessor from the event stole the headlines.

At the end of the week-long gathering in Beijing, China's ruling party approved a sweeping reshuffle that saw a number of top officials -- including Premier Li Keqiang -- step down, allowing Xi to appoint new allies.

The largely rubber-stamp meeting of around 2,300 party delegates was meticulously choreographed, with Xi determined to avoid any surprises as he enshrined his leadership for the next five years.

However, in an unexpected move that punctured the proceedings at the Great Hall of the People, former leader Hu Jintao was led out

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