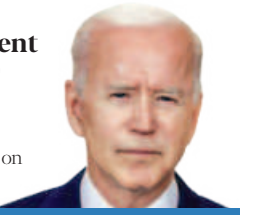


"I think he's (Russian President Vladimir Putin) trying to find some oxygen."

US President Joe Biden on Putin's ceasefire offer



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WRI

Promises remain promises



P6

Half of world's glaciers may vanish by 2100: study



P7

New year, new Dighi



P11

BPL council 'welcomes' Shakib as CEO

Stay alert

Hasina urges people referring to plots by 'anti-liberation forces' ahead of national polls



"If people vote the Awami League to power again, the party will continue to carry out the responsibility of building the nation. But if they don't, we will remain with them and keep serving them."

PM says in address to the nation, marking the fourth anniversary of the AL govt

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged people to remain vigilant against the anti-liberation forces that are plotting to seize power through the backdoor.

"I would like to urge everyone to keep a watchful eye so that no one can snatch away the rights of the people through conspiracy. At the same time, everyone should be alert so that no one can create anarchy and damage the lives, livelihood and properties of the people in the name of movement," she said yesterday in her address to the nation aired on Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar.

The next national election will be held at the end of this year or early next year, she said, adding that the anti-liberation, power-hungry plunderers were already trying to create chaos.

"Their aim is to... seize state power... and impede the progress of democracy."

The conspirators have hired intellectuals and orators at home and abroad to loot money to malign the ruling Awami League, she said in her 25-minute speech delivered at 7:30pm on the occasion of the 4th anniversary of the current government.

"They are trying to mislead people by spreading libels, false and fake information through social media."

The political parties and institutions that believe in democracy and the rule of law should reject ideas that undermine the constitutional process, she said.

"We expect a free, fair and impartial election."
The AL is a party of the people, she said. "If people vote the Awami League to power again, the party will continue to carry out the responsibility of building the nation. But if they don't, we will remain with them and keep serving them."

"Today, no one refers to Bangladesh as a country of floods, droughts and disasters. Bangladesh is now an emerging economy and a role model of development."

Hasina said the AL has been in charge of governing the country for 14 years in a row after the formation of government in 2009.

"Our country has progressed a lot. But we have to take it forward further. Achieving a developed and prosperous Bangladesh is our goal. After building Digital Bangladesh, our next goal is to build a Smart Bangladesh."

She said the use of robotics, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology and digital devices will be ensured in all fields, including the industrial, health, education and agriculture sectors, to build Smart Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Chhatra League leaders helping Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader get back on his feet moments after a stage collapsed near Oporajeyo Bangla on Dhaka University campus yesterday afternoon. Quader was addressing the event, organised on the occasion of BCL's 75th founding anniversary, when the mishap took place. The 71-year-old road transport and bridges minister was unhurt. PHOTO: COLLECTED

'We need activists, not leaders'

Says Quader at BCL event after stage collapses

STAR REPORT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said "we don't need leaders, we need smart activists" to build a smart Bangladesh.

He said this following the collapse of a stage on which he was standing along with a crowd of BCL leaders.

The mishap took place when Quader was addressing an event near Oporajeyo Bangla sculpture on Dhaka University campus on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of Bangladesh Chhatra League.

Quader was unhurt in the incident that left several people injured.

After the BCL leaders helped him get back on his feet, Quader said, "We protested the murder of Bangabandhu on this

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

\$4.5 BILLION LOAN PROGRAMME

Dhaka agrees to 30 conditions of IMF

First instalment of \$447.8m likely next month after IMF board approval in its upcoming meeting

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh has agreed to as many as 30 conditions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the \$4.5 billion loan programme that includes some key structural reforms stalled for years.

and other top government officials during her three day visit.

Sayeh's visit to Bangladesh is important as she is likely to preside over the next IMF board meeting where she would be explaining the current condition of Bangladesh and the rationale for the loan to

communication, the conditions of the loan programme have been finalised last month, according to finance ministry officials.

"We have agreed on the IMF loan programme. Now it will be placed on the IMF board. I hope, the loan will be approved," Finance Minister

STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS

Improve governance in the financial sector

Amend Bank Company Act

Leave out government staff's pension and interest on savings certificates from social safety net

Automated fuel pricing

Set up an asset management company to dispose of soured loans



BINDING CONDITIONS

Minimum level of net international reserves

Minimum level domestic revenue collection

Ceiling on the government's budget deficit

The loan proposal will be placed at the IMF executive board at the end of January for approval.

Before that, IMF's Deputy Managing Director Antoinette Monsio Sayeh will arrive in Dhaka on a fact-finding mission on January 16. She will meet the finance minister, the Bangladesh Bank governor

the board members, according to finance ministry officials involved in the loan negotiations.

The government has reached a preliminary agreement with Rahul Anand, IMF Mission Chief to Bangladesh, over the loan programme.

After detailed discussion and

AHM Mustafa Kamal told The Daily Star on January 1.

If the IMF board approves Bangladesh's loan application in January, the first instalment of \$447.8 million would be released the following month. It will be followed by six equal instalments of \$659.18

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

SYLHET AGRICULTURAL UNIV

10 hurt as BCL factions clash over meeting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

At least 10 students were injured as two groups of Chhatra League activists clashed over holding a meeting of Sylhet Agricultural University BCL unit yesterday afternoon.

Police and university sources said SAU unit BCL President Ashikur Rahman and General Secretary Emadul Hossain called a general meeting around 4:00pm yesterday while their rival group, led by vice-presidents Sharif Hossain and Sabbir Mollah, was against the meeting.

Over the issue, supporters of the two groups clashed around 2:45pm. At least 10 students were injured and one of them was taken to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

Several rooms of Shahporan Hall were also vandalised during the clash.

After having no committee for 10 years, a 20-member partial committee of the SAU BCL unit was formed by the central unit on July 30 last year. Since then, there has been a conflict between the two groups.

SAU unit BCL President Ashikur said, "As per the central committee instruction, we called a general meeting. Over the issue, some leaders and activists tried to create chaos and we tried to control it."

Sharif Hossain, vice-president of the unit, said, "They [president and secretary] have not declared the full-fledged committee of the university unit and committees of hall units yet, but were trying to hold a general meeting to declare faculty committees. Following that, many activists became enraged. We are not against the leadership of the unit, but we urged them to follow the organisational rules."

PHOTO ON PAGE 12

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Couple found dead in flat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A couple was found dead at a house in Dinajpur town early yesterday.

Police said the body of Mozibar Rahman, 65, was found hanging from the ceiling in his bedroom while the slit-throat body of his wife Suraiya Begum, 55, was in the kitchen of their rented flat.

Both of them worked at a lawyer's house in Munshipara area, they added.

Their son Sirajul Islam said the lawyer tried several times to reach his parents over the phone on Thursday night but failed.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

MISBEHAVIOUR WITH JUDGE

B'baria lawyers' conduct 'terrible, unfortunate'

Says law minister

STAR REPORT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said the manner in which a few Brahmanbaria lawyers behaved with a judge was terrible and unfortunate.

"I'm already aware of the Brahmanbaria incident... I have heard that Brahmanbaria district judge and other judges have lodged a complaint with the chief justice and sent a video clip to him showing a group of lawyers hurling abuse at a judge. And the High Court has issued a contempt of court rule in this regard," he told reporters at Akhaura railway junction in Brahmanbaria.

Since the matter is now under the jurisdiction of the higher court, it will be settled there, the minister added.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Congratulations to Auko-Tex Group!

We, Peoples Insurance Company Limited is delighted to inform our valued clients that, **AUKO-TEX GROUP** has been honored with the **President Award on Industrial Development** for the year 2020 by the Ministry of Industries in recognition of their Extra Ordinary Performances, Ethical Business Practices and massive contributions towards Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Environmental & Social issues. On behalf of **H.E. Md. Abdul Hamid, Honorable President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Mr. Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun, MP & Honorable Minister of Industries** handed over this prestigious award to **Respected Managing Director of AUKO-TEX GROUP, Engr Abdus Sobhan, CIP** on January 05, 2023.

On this auspicious occasion, Peoples Insurance Family acknowledge and appreciate Honesty, Integrity, Strong Leadership, Intellectual Rigor, Determination and Dedication of **Managing Director of AUKO-TEX GROUP**, which paving him ways to achieve this significant milestone.

We, all are proud of our valued client, **AUKO-TEX GROUP** and express our cordial wishes and heart-felt greetings for this achievement. We also pray for them to achieve more glory and laurels in future.

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