

"We do not see conflict with the PRC. We believe in the power of diplomacy to prevent miscalculations that can lead to conflict."
US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman on preserving dialogue with China

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### Momen likely to visit US next week

#### FM says US keen to clear up all misunderstandings

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen is likely to go to the US next week to attend several events there.

The foreign minister is likely to be in Los Angeles on February 19, Seheli Sabrin, spokesperson for the foreign ministry told a weekly press briefing yesterday.

He is expected to inaugurate a newly constructed Shaheed Minar, an initiative of expatriate Bangladeshis, in the City of Paris, Los Angeles.

Momen will also inaugurate a Bangladesh Corner at a public library there. He will also deliver a SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## Hit by bike, 7-month-old dies in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The family had just attended a pre-wedding ceremony in the capital's Uttara early yesterday.

Mazeda Begum was walking home holding her seven-month-old granddaughter Rafia Akter when a motorcycle hit them near Metro Rail Station No-2 12:45am.

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has disappeared!", near Raju Bhaskorjo on Dhaka
University campus yesterday. They did it in response to
the DU authorities removing a sculpture of Rabindranath
Tagore with tape over his mouth. Students placed it there
on Tuesday to protest the "stifling of free speech". Story
on Page 3.

PHOTO: COLLECTED/PRABIR DAS

# Dummy candidates on AL's mind

Hasina asks party MPs to prepare hard for polls, as 'BNP, allies might in the end join the election'

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The ruling Awami League plans to field dummy candidates alongside its nominees in all constituencies to make the next election look participatory in the absence of the opposition parties.

At the ÅL Parliamentary Party meeting on February 7, Sheikh Hasina asked the lawmakers to prepare a list of probable pretend candidates for their constituencies, sources said.

However, the AL president said the BNP and like-minded parties may eventually take part in the election this time and they are preparing in covert to that end

preparing in covert to that end.
Saying the next election would be

tough for the AL, Hasina instructed the lawmakers to work hard for the polls slated for early January 2024. In the 2014 general election, 154 AL nominees won unopposed after

the BNP withdrew from the polls.

The AL supremo had issued similar directives ahead of the last national polls in 2018, but the BNP SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

#### VGF PROGRAMME IN RAMADAN

# 1cr families to get 10kg rice each for free

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government plans to distribute 10 kilogrammes of rice for free to each of more than one crore ultra-poor and destitute families under the Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) programme in the upcoming Ramadan as part of the measures to cushion them from the cost of living crisis.

The rice would be distributed by the ministry of disaster management and relief, Food Minister Sadhan Chandar Majumder told journalists yesterday at the secretariat.

The government has imported good quality Atap rice from Myanmar for the

VGF programme, Majumder said. The distribution will be carried

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# You will be Remembered...





### Mr. Ekram Uddin Mollah

(Born: 30th January 1991 - Died: 17th February 2019)

We remember him in honor of the 4<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of Mr. Ekram Uddin Mollah, the honorable director of the Osman Group of Industries. We pray for the forgiveness of the departed soul in the court of Almighty Allah and pray by the grace of Allah will dwell in Paradise.

Osman Group of Industries



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