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Polls-time govt a possibility but without BNP

PM again rules out dialogue

Govt has no objection to BNP's movement but violence won't be tolerated

Age limit for entering govt jobs won't rise

Not too many reasons to be worried about forex reserves



STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said an election-time government can be formed with the parties having representation in parliament, although the next general election will be held following the Westminster-style of democracy in Britain.

"We will hold the election like it is conducted in Britain ... We can show our generosity if any MP from the political parties having representation in parliament expresses the desire to join the election-time government. We are ready to welcome them," she said.

Hasina was addressing a press conference at the Gono Bhaban yesterday afternoon. The event was organised to brief the media about the outcome of her recent visits to Japan, the US, and the UK, reports BSS.

Mentioning that the Awami League showed such generosity previously, the premier said BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia was asked to give the name of her party's representative for the polls-time government ahead of the 2014 national election, but the BNP did not.

"They [BNP] are not in parliament now. There is nothing to think about," she said.

All seven BNP MPs resigned from the Jatiya Sangsad in December last year as part of the party's anti-government movement.

Asked if the government would hold any talks with those political parties who are now waging an anti-government movement, the premier said, "Why would we call them to talks? Their demands are not clear."

Talking about the US dollar crisis, Hasina said the crisis is not only in SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Fishermen in Cox's Bazar's Najirartek beach ready their boats to go back out to sea, a day after Cyclone Mocha made its landfall on the Myanmar coast and the impacts are over. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: MOKAMMEL SHUVO



AL expels Zahangir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Suspended mayor of Gazipur City Corporation Zahangir Alam has been permanently expelled from the ruling Awami League, said a party press release yesterday.

"Awami League's central executive committee expelled Zahangir permanently as per the party charter. It will come into effect immediately," read the release signed by Biplab Barua, AL office secretary.

The decision came a day after a secretary-level meeting of the ruling party, with General Secretary Obaidul Quader in the chair, recommended expelling Zahangir from the party.

Zahangir, who was elected Gazipur mayor in 2018 on AL ticket, also became the general secretary of the party's Gazipur city unit.

On November 19, 2021, he was expelled from the party after he was heard in a viral footage making derogatory remarks on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and questioning the number of the Liberation War martyrs. SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Govt calls off addl security for 6 envoys

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The government has withdrawn additional security given to the ambassadors and high commissioners of India, China, Australia, Saudi Arabia and the US and UK, saying that the security situation in the country is "very satisfactory" and that there is a shortage of police personnel.

"Recently, a number of embassies have demanded additional security. We have decided not to extend this service to any," Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen told The Daily Star yesterday.

He, however, said if any embassy wants it, it can avail itself of such SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Reforms must address rising inequality

Speakers tell dialogue on upcoming budget

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should adjust economic reforms in such a way so that inequality is reined in, said speakers at a dialogue organised by the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh.

The dialogue was organised to stress that concerns of the disadvantaged should be addressed in the upcoming national budget. It is the first budget after the IMF started disbursing funds under its \$4.7 billion loan programme for Bangladesh.

The IMF has attached several conditions for the loan. Debapriya Bhattacharya, a

distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said most of the reform measures built into the IMF loan were overdue. "The government should have carried out these reforms on its own."

He said numerous studies, including ones by the IMF, have consistently showed that inequality tends to rise during IMF programmes or as a result of IMF conditions.

He suggested that if the government calibrated the IMF conditions in a proper way, inequality could be contained.

"For example, the IMF has SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



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