



MEETINGS WITH EU TEAM AL, BNP stick to stances on polls-time govt

STAR REPORT

Both the ruling Awami League and opposition BNP stuck to their guns over the form of the polls-time government during their meetings with the visiting European Union delegation yesterday.

At its meeting with the EU delegation at the party chairperson Khaleda Zia's Gulshan office, the BNP made it clear that no acceptable election is possible under the incumbent government, which has been in power since 2009.

The AL on the other hand took a firm stance that a free and fair election is possible only under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The main opposition in parliament Jatiya Party, which sat with the EU delegation later in the day, stressed the need for talks to resolve the political crisis just a few months before the national election expected in late 2023 or early 2024.

The six-member European Union Election Exploratory Mission came to Dhaka on July 9 to assess the election environment. The Mission is expected to end on July 23, and the delegation, led by Chelleri Riccardo, will prepare a report on the outcome of its visit. The report will form the basis for the EU to determine whether it will send a team to observe the national election.

Yesterday's series of meetings with political parties came just two days after a high-level US delegation wrapped up its visit. During a joint press conference with Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen at a state guest house on Thursday, US Under Secretary Uzra Zeya told journalists the US supports free and fair elections and is "all for dialogues".

Yesterday, the EU delegation held its first meeting with the BNP when its leaders made it clear that it was impossible to join elections under this government, reports UNB.

"We've told them that there's no question of going to elections under this regime, it is not possible. There are so many reasons behind it," BNP Standing Committee Member Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury told reporters after the meeting that began at 9:00am.

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Left, ships are moored at a jetty on the Shitalakkhya in Kanchpur of Narayanganj. The authorities set up the jetty for loading and unloading of factory products and raw materials. With this initiative, the authorities have protected the river bank from grabbers. Encroachment was evident in the photo, **right**, published in The Daily Star on November 7, 2012.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



the BUSINESS

Clients of two insurers unsure about claim settlement
Many clients of Homeland Life Insurance Company and Fareast Islami Life Insurance are uncertain about whether they will get back their insured amount owing to a lack of liquidity at the insurers.
Currently, Homeland is not settling claims involving Tk 79 crore, while Fareast owed Tk 4,559 crore to policy-holders in 2022.

STORY ON B1

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT Mired in corruption

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Corruption seems to be a constant at the Department of Youth Development.

An investigation at the department has recently found an embezzlement of Tk 13.96 crore in what is the seventh such incident at the department in two years.

The probe committee by the youth and sports ministry and the DYD early this year found 10 officials and employees of the department and the accounts office in Zakiganj, Sylhet, were involved in the racket.

DYD Deputy Director Ali Ashraf illegally allocated the fund to a skills training programme for the youth in Zakiganj in 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 fiscal years even though the programme ended in November 2019, according to findings by the three-member committee headed by Deputy Secretary Fazle Elahi.

Ashraf and the others then withdrew the money and misappropriated it, reads the

probe report submitted to the secretary of the youth and sports ministry on January 4 this year.

The committee named the nine others as DYD Deputy Director Farhat Noor, Assistant Director Fazlul Haque, upazila youth development officers (UYDO) Azharul Kabir and Abul Kalam Azad, Accountant Nurul Amin, office assistants Babul Patwary and Jashim Uddin, Accounts Officer Kamal Hossain, and Auditor Iqbal Munshi.

Another probe committee formed by the DYD to look into the same incident found that from November 2019 to June 2022, Tk 16.14 crore was misappropriated from the programme.

The fund for the NSP (National Service Programme) was approved by DYD Director General Azharul Islam Khan.

Contacted, Azharul said on May 31 that there were proposals for approval of such funds for Zakiganj and several other upazilas, SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Govt is always there for you

**PM tells businesspeople;
FBCCI leaders say they want
Hasina in power again**

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the businesspeople to develop new products and find new export markets utilising their innovative ideas.

"The government is always there for you," she said.

The premier was addressing the opening ceremony of the "Business Conference

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

POLITICAL STABILITY PREREQUISITE FOR 'SMART BANGLADESH' - BI



The Dharla has washed away a section of a road in Gorokmandal BDR Bazar area of Kurigram's Phulbari upazila, cutting road communications between six villages and the upazila town. Parts of five upazilas in the district have already been affected by flooding due to onrush of water from upstream and heavy rain. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

Get tested for dengue at first sign of fever

**Doctors say; advise not
taking unprescribed
antibiotics, painkillers**

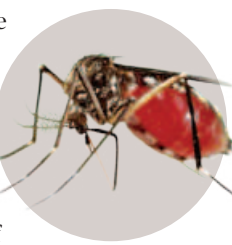
MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Amidst the ongoing dengue outbreak, medical professionals have recommended individuals to promptly get tested upon the earliest onset of fever.

Patients with fever should get tested immediately irrespective of whether there are symptoms associated with dengue, including body ache.

While bed rest and nourishment through the consumption of liquids is urgent, doctors suggest refraining from taking painkillers or antibiotics. However, they recommend only paracetamol as primary medication.

"Currently, it is crucial for everyone



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She didn't know it was his last call

**Says mother of migrant killed
in Saudi factory fire, 8 other
Bangladeshis among the dead**

STAR REPORT

Like every week, after Juma prayers, Mohammad Obaidul made a video call to his mother Rahela Begum in Bangladesh from Al Hofuf, about 350 kilometres from the Saudi capital Riyadh. Little did she know that that would be the last time she would be speaking to her son.

Obaidul was killed -- along with eight other Bangladeshis and one Indian citizen -- later that day in a devastating fire at the furniture factory where he worked.

"My son wanted to return to the country and get married in a few months. All those dreams are now shattered," said Rahela yesterday, holding a picture of her son.

Youngest among 11 siblings, Obidaul, 34, from Chandpur village of Natore's Naldanga upazila, went to Saudi Arabia in 2019 to bring solvency to his family.

He worked in a Saudi company before shifting to the furniture factory a few months later.

One of his cousins Yadul, who is working in a factory in Dammam, informed the family of the fire at Obaidul's factory. The family tried to communicate with Obaidul all night but they could not get through. Yadul informed them of Obaidul's death early yesterday.

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Tony Fernandes

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