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Time to act like a caretaker admin

BNP tells Yunus; demands removal of 'party-affiliated' advisers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



"We will choose the individuals [admin officials] who are capable of maintaining peace and order [during polls]. This will be [done] under my supervision. We will do whatever necessary to ensure a peaceful and neutral election."

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus

The BNP yesterday asked the interim government to assume the role of a non-partisan caretaker administration to ensure that the upcoming national election is neutral and acceptable to all.

It made the demand when a three-member BNP delegation, led by Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, met Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at the State Guest House Jamuna yesterday evening.

The delegation also urged Yunus to remove "party-affiliated advisers", if any, from the interim government and ensure that neutral administrative officials are posted during reshuffles ahead of the polls.

Yunus informed the senior BNP leaders that, as the adviser in charge of the public administration ministry, all administrative reshuffles ahead of the election would take place directly under his supervision, according to a statement issued by the CA's Press Wing.

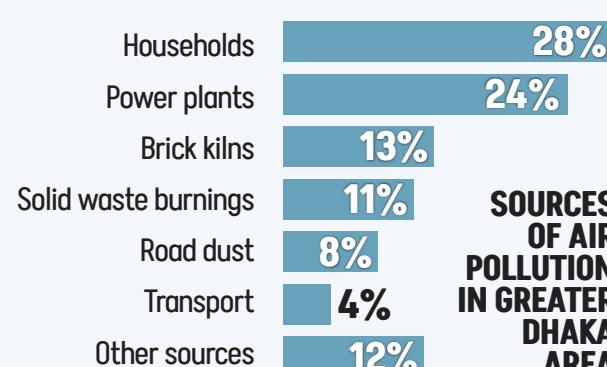
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Palestinian children gather for food distributed by a charity kitchen in Nuseirat refugee camp, central Gaza Strip, yesterday—one week after a ceasefire took effect. Story on page 5.

PHOTO: AFP

Dhaka air turns unhealthy even before dry season



PINAKI ROY

With the dry season approaching, Dhaka city's air quality has once again slipped to an unhealthy level, underscoring the inadequacy of the limited measures taken by the authorities to curb air pollution.

Over the past decade, the government has attempted to phase out clay bricks, curb the burning of solid waste, control dust pollution at construction sites, and remove old vehicles from roads. But it has failed to properly implement any of the initiatives.

According to the Department of Environment (DoE) data, the air quality in Dhaka city and its suburbs was classified as hazardous for sensitive groups over the past week. The Air

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AIRPORT FIRE AFTERMATH RMG, pharma fear snag in production

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA and TUHIN SHUBHIRA ADHIKARY

Many import consignments of the garment and pharmaceutical sectors are stuck at Dubai and Singapore airports because of the space crisis in Dhaka's cargo village and the lack of cold room facilities for pharmaceutical raw materials after the fire incident.

Currently, the imported goods are stored in a small space of the export cargo section at the cargo village area at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA), which cannot handle 550 tonnes of cargo a day that normally arrive. So, the importers are delaying the import of goods and many consignments are stuck at Dubai and Singapore airports.

However, the government has created a facility to release the goods on the same day of import, which is very helpful for manufacturers, said Inamul Haq Khan, senior vice-president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

The Biman authority also asked the importers to take delivery of the goods that could be salvaged from the fire incident as soon as possible.

As of yesterday, 1,300 companies registered their names in the BGMEA launched a temporary web portal claiming damage of \$7.5 million. The final tally will be more as not everyone has registered yet.

The severity of the fire incident will be much higher as the import consignments of many companies were burnt out and they will face a two-month delay in production as they will have to re-import those goods, he said.

Subsequently, some of the international clothing retailers and brands are slashing down the work orders.

Mijanur Rahman, managing director of Fabrica Knit Composite, who suffered damages worth \$300,000

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ICT to review progress in cases against army officers today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 today is to review the progress in a July uprising killing case and two enforced disappearance cases, in which 32 people, including 25 serving and retired army officers, stand accused.

On October 8, the tribunal issued arrest warrants against the accused after taking cognisance of formal charges submitted by the prosecution and directed the inspector general of police to execute the warrants. It also sent the copies of the warrants to relevant authorities of the accused officers and fixed today for submission of a compliance report.

Asked whether any of the accused had been arrested or would be produced before the tribunal today, Prosecutor Gazi Monawar Hossain Tamim said such information would come directly to the tribunal's registrar office, which dispatches the tribunal's orders, not to the prosecution.

The tribunal will announce today whether the registrar office has received any such information, he said.

Tamim explained that under the law, accused persons may either

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TIGERS' SUPER OVER HEARTBREAK

Bangladesh faltered in their first-ever Super Over appearance in any format, failing to chase down 10 runs against the West Indies in the second ODI of the three-match series at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. The hosts restricted the Windies to 10 runs in the Super Over bowled by Mustafizur Rahman but their batting left much to be desired. Despite receiving extras in the form of two wides and a no-ball, the Tigers still fell short. Soumya Sarkar managed a run-a-ball three, while Saif Hassan scored two off three deliveries. Najmul Hossain Shanto failed to make contact but ran a leg bye before Saif could not score the required three off the final delivery bowled by left-arm spinner Akeel Hosein.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

DEALS WITH INDIA Touhid refutes Asif's scrap list

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain has contradicted LGRD Adviser Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuiya's claim, made in a Facebook post, that the interim government cancelled at least 10 agreements with India.

"Regarding the list that has come out, most of it is either incorrect or doesn't exist," he told reporters at the foreign ministry yesterday.

"Perhaps he could have avoided doing it [making the Facebook post about the issue]," Touhid said.

On Sunday, Asif posted on his verified Facebook page a list of 14 deals with India, saying 10 of them were cancelled by the interim government.

The deals he mentioned include Tripura-Chittagong rail link project; Abhaypur-Akhaura railway expansion; Ashuganj-Agartala corridor; Feni river water management project; agreement on the development of roads and waterways for port use; proposal for financial cooperation on Farakka Barrage; Sylhet-Silchar link project; petroleum pipeline expansion project; Indian economic

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