

## AL walks out Bill to set up energy regulatory body passed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday passed a bill providing for setting up of an independent Energy Regulatory Commission for better management of the energy sector.

It was passed amid a walkout by opposition Awami League lawmakers. The bill sparked a heated debate with most of the opposition deputies terming it a preparatory step by the government to export gas.

They said they will resist any move to export gas through pipeline.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

## Slogan, chaos at BB over reforms Pro-BNP officers likely to besiege governor today

STAR REPORT

Four pro-ruling BNP officers associations of the central bank yesterday created chaos at the bank to protest the ongoing banking sector reforms.

They may besiege the governor today, sources said.

Some 50 officers of the associations under the banner of the

Jatiyatabadi Forum tried to enter the Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed's office to meet him, according to sources. But the staff at the governor's office prevented them. At this, they chanted slogans using abusive language for half an hour, the sources added.

Earlier, the finance minister rang the governor up and the governor was preparing to go to the

finance ministry. The deputy governors were already on their way to the ministry and the governor had no time to meet the officers at that time, sources said.

As the governor was passing the officers, they chanted slogans and created chaos for half an hour.

The Forum leaders were trying to meet the governor to place their five-point demand, which includes

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

## Evacuation Family members of diplomats, staff in Iraq returning home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has instructed the Bangladesh mission in Baghdad to evacuate family members of the diplomats and employees, as the possibility of a US-led war on Iraq looms large.

Already many of the family members of the mission staff and employees have returned to Dhaka, foreign ministry officials said.

Dhaka has taken full preparation to evacuate Bangladeshi nationals and officers and staff of its mission in Iraq in the event of a war.

The government has assigned the job of vacating the mission to Sarwar Hossain Mollah, ambassa

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



PHOTO: AFP

THE EXECUTIONER: Indian batsman Sachin Tendulkar hits out against Sri Lanka at the Wanderers in Johannesburg yesterday.



PHOTO AND TEXT: MORSHED ALI KHAN

Although a cleaner benefits from the absence of vehicles on the Jamuna Bangabandhu Bridge, the toll collection nosedived due to a countrywide hartal yesterday. The bridge staff said they may incur a loss of about Tk 30 lakh. Only a few ambulances crossed the bridge by yesterday noon. Usually, about 600 vehicles from both sides cross it by midday on other days.

## 28 arrested Hartal passes off peacefully

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal enforced yesterday by the 11-party alliance passed off without any major incident of violence.

The hartal shut educational institutions, business establishments and affected movement of vehicles in the capital and the districts.

Four persons were injured in police action during the hartal hours, 11-party alliance leaders alleged. They said a total of 28 people were picked by the members of the law enforcing agencies during the hartal hours in different places.

Eight were arrested at Gaibandha, two at Khulna, three at Barisal, four at Jessore, five at Pirojpur, four at Jahangirnagar University and two at Tongi.

Three persons were injured when police went on action on a procession of the 11-party activists at Narayanganj.

The left leaning alliance called the shut down protesting price hike of essentials, terrorism and corruption, passage of indemnity law, enhancement of bus fare, and the US war plan on Iraq.

Over 4,000 police were deployed in various strategic points of the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

## India blow Lanka away

REUTERS, Johannesburg

India stormed into the World Cup semifinals on Monday with a 183-run win over Sri Lanka in their Super Six match at The Wanderers.

Javagal Srinath wrecked the batting with four of the first five wickets as Sri Lanka tumbled to 109 all out from 23 overs. It was India's biggest win over the 1996 champions and Sri Lanka's second lowest World Cup score.

Srinath, 33, captured two wickets in his first over and finished with four for 35 from nine fierce and disciplined overs. Left-arm fast bowler Ashish Nehra finished with

identical figures from seven.

Chasing India's formidable 292 for six, built on Sachin Tendulkar's commanding 97, Sri Lanka were soon in deep trouble.

Srinath removed his first three victims for ducks, claiming Marvan Atapattu and Jehan Mubarak in his

first over before trapping in-form Aravinda De Silva lbw to make it 15 for four in the fourth over.

Left-armed Zaheer Khan dismissed Mahela Jayawardene lbw for a duck and captain Sanath

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

## 6 of a family killed in Chittagong fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Six members of a family were killed in a fire that broke out at Burma Colony in the city yesterday.

The dead were wife, four children and a niece of one Kazi Chan Mia, reportedly a security staff of Patuakhali Science, Technology and Agriculture College.

The victims have been identified as Chan Mia's wife Hazera Begum, 50, daughter Hasina Akhter Khushi, 20, three school-going sons - Anisur Rahman, 14, Obaedur Rahman, 12, Mizanur Rahman, 10, and niece Shahana Akhter, 22, daughter of one Shahjahan.

The fire also gutted around 450 shanties of the slum raised on government land at Burma Colony, rendering over 2000 people homeless.

Police, fire service sources and witnesses said the fire that occurred at 5.30am spread quickly, engulfing the whole slum. It trapped all the members of Chan Mia's family inside their house and they were burnt to death. Only

Chan Mia who was staying in Patuakhali and his eldest son Habibur Rahman, a driver, escaped it. Habibur Rahman left the house only four days back, following a quarrel, local people said.

Fire service sources could not confirm the origin of the fire. However, they apprehend that the fire might have originated from an electric short-circuit. The losses caused by it in terms of property could not be estimated immediately.

Fire fighters brought the fire under control after a four-hour effort, at around 9.30am.

BSS adds: At least 50 houses were gutted and 12 people injured in a fire at Kutubdia Para near Cox's Bazar Airport yesterday.

Police and local people said the fire originated from an oven at the house of one Abdul Munaf at noon and soon engulfed the other houses.

Fire fighters rushed to the spot and extinguished the blaze with the help of local people.

## One more Al-Hiqma activist arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Detective Branch (DB) of police arrested another member of the banned Shahadat-e-Al Hiqma party from the city's Kathalbaria area yesterday, raising the number of arrested Al Hiqma members to five.

Abdus Subhan, 55, son of Abdul Gani Shah of Kathalbaria area under Rajpara thana, was arrested under Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), police said.

A magistrate's court here sent him to jail custody yesterday rejecting his bail prayer after he was produced before the court.

Abdus Subhan had attended a February 8 press conference and introduced himself as the agriculture affairs secretary of the district BNP, sources said.

The four other arrested Al Hiqma members are Shamim Uddin, Nizam Uddin, Rahmat Ali Sarkar and Azhar Ali.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## 2 held with arms, explosives near Benapole border

Police suspect subversive acts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Jhikargacha thana police arrested two young men on Sunday afternoon from Bakurha bazar near Benapole border for carrying arms and explosives.

Police recovered from their possession seven powerful grenades, two revolvers, nine petrol bombs, seven revolver bullets, some ingredients for making bullets, two 16-inch long daggers, 10 remote control batteries, different kinds of electrical tools and a diary.

Police said the arms, ammunition, explosives and other equipment were made in India.

The OC of Jhikargacha thana said that the two arrested youths and four others, who had escaped,

might be connected with some Islamic militant organisation or terrorist outfit. He said that the arrestees have given 'sensational' information about their plan of carrying out subversive activities.

The arrestees have been identified as Zahidul Islam Shumon, 20, from Jamalpur district and Shahidullah, 18, from Mollahat upazilla of Bagerhat district. Police said Shahidullah is a student of class seven of Bamandanga Madrassah under Rupsha thana of Khulna district.

According to Shahidul Islam, SP of Jessore, six young men riding three motor cycles were bound for Khulna, carrying arms and explosives from Benapole border. When

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

## Hearing resumes tomorrow

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Hearing of the Shazneen rape case will resume tomorrow.

Kazi Rahamat Ullah, judge of the Second Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka, yesterday adjourned the hearing as the accused in the case were not produced before the court due to hartal.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, the youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, Chairman of Transcom Ltd, was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence on April 23, 1998.