



PHOTO: STAR

Protesters demonstrate against a housing department's plan to construct flats for government officials and employees on open spaces and the playground of New Colony at Asad Gate, Mohammadpur, yesterday.

Cry for greens

New Colony residents protest housing ministry's plan to eat up playground

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several hundred men, women and children joined hands over a demonstration against construction work on open spaces and the playground of New Colony at Asad Gate yesterday.

They shouted slogans for immediate cancellation of a housing department project covering every bit of open spaces in the colony area and one of the last remaining playgrounds of the city.

Housewives, the elderly, children, students and professionals from the New Colony, Lalmatia, Dhanmondi and Mohammadpur expressed their solidarity with the Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon and vowed to save the playground and open spaces from whom they called 'land pirates'.

Officials at the housing department under the Ministry of Housing and Public Works said they would build 500 flats to sell to government officials and employees.

The angry protesters termed the activities of the officials 'criminal, undemocratic and mindless'.

The government is violating "all norms of a civilised society" by grabbing playgrounds and open spaces, said a demonstrator.

Influential project contractors, allegedly backed by a brother of a minister, have filed false complaints against three frontline protesters with the Mohammadpur Police Station.

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State media asked to handle war news carefully

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has imposed restriction on the state-controlled media and asked it to "carefully handle" news regarding the US-led war on Iraq.

Highly placed official sources said the foreign ministry has asked the authorities of Bangladesh Betar, Bangladesh Television and BSS news agency "not to highlight statements in favour of Iraq and demonstrations against the USA".

They have also been advised to broadcast, telecast or transmit pro-Iraq news items "very mildly" and if necessary, discuss with higher

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Six get life term for rape

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Six persons have been awarded rigorous imprisonment for life for abducting and raping a young woman in the city in May last year.

The convicts are Mosharrif Sharif Titu, Monirul Islam, Abdul Wahid, Abdul Kader, Saiful Islam and Abdul Malek of Sujannagar area of the city. All the six are youths.

The Speedy Trial Tribunal, Rajshahi Division, yesterday delivered the judgement in the sensational Parul murder case in a packed courtroom.

Judge ASM Aminul Islam of the tribunal also fined the convicts TK one lakh each.

The youths abducted 20-year-old Parul from her house in the same

area and took her to a lonely place at nearby Koirdara in the evening on May 2 last year. They kept her confined for the whole night and raped her.

Next morning, local people recovered Parul in a critical condition.

The victim filed a case accusing the six with the Boalia Police Station. Charge sheet against them was submitted on June 16 last year.

Trial of the case began at the Special Court for Women and Children Repression Prevention and it was transferred to the tribunal on February 23 this year.

Special Public Prosecutor Ketabuddin represented the state and Advocate Abul Kashem moved for the accused.

JCD men snatch away test result sheet at IU

IU CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of the ruling BNP, yesterday snatched the result sheet of first year honours admission test at the Islamic University (IU).

They took away the result sheet from the office of Deputy Registrar of the university Dr Rezaul Karim, forced him out and locked his office.

Test results for admission under special quotas were scheduled to be published yesterday. A list of stu

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| | Sun Rises | Sun Sets |
|--------|-----------|----------|
| Mar 21 | | 6-10 pm |
| Mar 22 | 6-01 am | |

| Prayer Timings | | |
|----------------|-------|--------|
| Mar 21 | | |
| | Azan | Jamaat |
| Fajr | 5-15 | 5-40 |
| Juma | 12-15 | 1-15 |
| Asr | 4-32 | 5-00 |
| Maghrib | 6-13 | 6-20 |
| Esha | 7-35 | 8-00 |

Source: Islamic Foundation

Al Hiqma men charged with sedition

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

A sedition case was filed against nine leaders and activists of the banned Islamic group Shahadat-e Al Hiqma yesterday following home ministry clearance.

Five of them are in custody. They are Abdus Subhan, Shamim Uddin, Nizam Uddin, Rahmat Ali Sarkar and Azhar Ali Mridha.

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Female worker killed in Ctg, 2 more hurt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

One female garment worker was killed and two others injured yesterday when a bus knocked them down in front of the Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ) yesterday.

The ill-fated was identified as Nazma Akter, 20; the injured were Morsheda and Rekha.

Following the accident, agitated CEPZ workers set the bus ablaze and beat up the driver. The agitation also disrupted work at some of the

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Left parties call half-day hartal across country tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Left-leaning organisations have called a half-day hartal across the country tomorrow protesting the US attack on Iraq.

The Left Democratic Front in a statement yesterday said the hartal was in protest of the US-led attack on the innocent people of Iraq.

It said the Bush administration was bent on a war with the inten

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Dhaka regrets war, watches situation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka regretted the failure in finding a peaceful solution to the Iraq crisis and said it is closely monitoring the situation.

"We always wanted a peaceful solution to the Iraq issue. It's unfortunate that a peaceful solution could not be arrived at," Foreign Secretary Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury told newsmen at the Foreign Ministry.

Evading a direct reply to w h e t h e r

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Four army men jailed for extortion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four army men, including a captain, were sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment by a court martial yesterday for extortion from busi-

nessmen.

The Field General Court-Martial also terminated Captain Atiqur Rahman and sepoy Mizanur Rahman, Afazul Alam and Mohammad Ashiqur Rahman from

service.

The court awarded seven-year rigorous imprisonment on Captain Atiq, four year imprisonment on sepoy Mizanur and three-year on Alam after judging their offences on

the basis of the military law.

The accused will serve their terms in civil jails.

Earlier, a summary court-martial awarded 89 days' imprisonment on

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