

Hasina doubtful about fairness of next polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her doubts about fairness of the next general election.

She said her fears are based on the fact that the government is politicising all sectors including the judiciary and administration. The coalition government is tormenting opposition activists in violation of human rights, she told a 14-member delegation of the South Asia Human Rights (SAHR) led by its Chairman and former Indian prime minister I.K. Gujral.

Uttara rifle loot 8 remanded for quizzing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Eight people, arrested in connection with the looting of rifles and ammunition from police Saturday night at Uttara, were taken on a three-day remand for questioning.

Indian foreign secy due today

BSS, Dhaka
Indian Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal arrives here today on a three-day visit to Bangladesh during which he will hold talks with his Bangladesh counterpart Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury on April 29, official sources said.

Protest against admin cadre appointment Govt college teachers give May 15 deadline

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Government college teachers yesterday asked the government to withdraw 140 administrative cadre officials from different offices under the education ministry by May 15 or face a massive movement.



PHOTO: STAR

Back to basics...When the world did not go techy, pinhole photography ruled the roost. In observance of the World Pinhole Day, a photographer trying his hands in the outdated art at the National Press Club premises yesterday.

Khulna rifle looting now a theft case Probe body formed, leave of ansars cancelled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna
A three-member committee, headed by Range Commander of ansars Mohammad Nurul Karim, has been formed to probe the looting of 20 rifles and 600 bullets from Daulatpur Jute Mill.

"We are investigating why 20 rifles and 600 bullets were sanctioned for guarding a closed industry while no arms were given to secure Khulna Hardboard Mill which was laid off last March," said a senior officer of the Khulna Metropolitan Police. The Khulna district jail meanwhile has been put on high alert at the instruction of the Ministry of Home Affairs and police headquarters, Dhaka as outlaws of Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) are very active now.

South Africa go one-up

HASAN MASOOD from Chittagong
It took exactly fifty-five minutes on Sunday morning for Bangladesh to surrender their last five wickets against South Africa in the first Test here at the MA Aziz Stadium.



PHOTO: STAR
DESTROYERS-IN-CHIEF: South Africans Jacques Rudolph (L) and Paul Adams pose with their cheques after the end of the first Test in Chittagong yesterday. Man-of-the-match Rudolph, making debut, destroyed Bangladesh with an unbeaten double century while Adams did so by taking 10 wickets in the match. The latter was adjudged bowler of the match.

1,051 pushed in by India since Jan 23

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The Border Security Force (BSF) of India has pushed 1,051 Bangla-speaking Indians into Bangladesh since January 23 this year, Odhikar, a human rights organisation, said in a report yesterday.

SARS fears Beijing shuts theatres, dance halls

REUTERS, Beijing
Beijing has ordered the closure of theatres, dance halls and other entertainment venues to try to contain the SARS virus that killed 48 people and infected nearly 1,000 people in the Chinese capital, state media said yesterday.

BDR-BSF border confce on

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Five-day long Director General (DG) meeting between the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and the Border Security Force (BSF) started at the BDR headquarters in the city yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR
Nationalised Commercial Bank employees yesterday protest the recent move to reform the state-owned banks, which includes privatising Rupali Bank and giving management of Agrani to private hand.

Entrepreneurs favour tax holiday, economists not

STAR REPORT
Economists at a discussion called for progressive reduction in tax holiday, but entrepreneurs urged to maintain it to compensate for high capital cost and poor electricity supply, port operation and law and order situation.

Debabriya said stimulation of investment, strengthening of the balance of payment and further fiscal consolidation should be the priorities for budget FY04. These three essentially relate to the objective of adding a fillip to growth, he added.

President Yussuf Abdullah Harun said deteriorating law and order, poor electricity supply and port operations were pushing the costs of business up. "If it is not possible to improve law and order, power supply and port operations, tax holiday should be continued to compensate these things," he added.

Saddam in the hearts of Tikrit people

REUTERS, Tikrit
On the eve of Saddam Hussein's 66th birthday, US soldiers armed with spray cans blackened out a freshly painted sign declaring: "Happy Birthday, my leader Saddam Hussein." Two boys on bicycles raced away from the troops in the village of Awja, where Saddam was raised, saying they were wasting their time. "It will be written up again," said 12-year-old Mutaz Sabah.



town of Tikrit, 175 km north of Baghdad. "If we don't celebrate in the streets, we will celebrate in our... SEE PAGE 11 COL 7"

Tk 12 lakh robbed from office staff at Hatkhola

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Robbers looted Tk 12 lakh from the employees of a private company at Hatkhola in Sutrapur yesterday morning.

Sonali Bank at Badamtali Ghat in old Dhaka. The miscreants dragged the employees out of the car and drove away. The car was found at nearby Mitali School lane. The police searched the car and found Tk 3 lakh. Police seized the car for further investigation.

Student shot dead at IU

IU CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia
An applicant for first year honours programme was shot dead and another student stabbed on the Islamic University (IU) campus on Saturday night. The victim has been identified as Mohammed Hafiz, 21, from Hattia-Abdalpur village under the Islamic University Police Station.

Prayer Timings

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
April 28	4-45	6-26 pm
April 29	5-26 am	

Prayer Timings		
April 28		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-31	6-37
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation