# **Downtown Dhaka**

FROM PAGE 1 rallies at different parts of the city in the afternoon in protest of the attacks. Assistant Deputy Commissioner (East) Imtiaz Ahmed, however, coun-

ter-blamed the opposition men for "provoking" the police to go into action. The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) had deployed around 9,000 law enforcers at different strategic points around the secretariat to thwart the opposition men

The police put up barbed-wire fences at Matsya Bhaban, Paltan Baitul Mukarram, Noor crossing, Hossain Square, Bangabandhu Avenue and Doyel Chattar early in the morning and prevented all kinds of traffic in the areas They also took positions at different

lanes and by-lanes, and rooftops of high-rise buildings in the areas.

Earlier on Tuesday, the DMP issued a release, imposing the ban on all kinds of gatherings and rallies in the adjoined areas of the secretariat for 24 hours from Wednesday midnight, considering the opposition programme a "security threat" to the secretariat.

#### **THE CLASHES**

Processions of opposition activists from different parts of the city and adjacent districts started gathering at the police barricades in different areas at 10:00am. Led by senior leaders of the alliance, the demonstrations chanted anti-government slogans.

As a post-sit-in rally ended near the Bangabandhu National Stadium, the main venue of the sit-in programme, at Gulistan around 12:35pm. the demonstrators and the law enforcers locked in a clash

The protesters pelted stones at the police in a bid to break the barricade while the law enforcers fired dozens of

## Call money

FROM PAGE 1 40 percent ceiling has 'saved' about Tk 28 lakh of one bank, "which borrowed money at 120 percent interest.

#### WHY DID IT HAPPEN Normally, the call money rate does

not exceed 10 percent. But, as the Bangladesh Bank since early this month has more frequently been using reverse Repo (repurchase agreement) to withdraw money from the market, a

liquidity crisis emerged, pushing the call money rate up to a range between 15 and 40 percent. Pubali Bank Managing Director Khandker Ibrahim Khaled held two major factors responsible for yester-

day's bizarre phenomenon. "It was the last day for the banks to maintain their cash-reserve ratio [CRR, 5 percent on average]. To attain that, many banks had to borrow heavily, pushing up the call money rate," he cited as one of the factors.

The second factor, he said, was the reverse Repo by which the central bank yesterday withdrew Tk 444 crore from the already cashstarved market

On the reason for withdrawing so much money from the market by the BB yesterday, Jamsheduz-zaman said the central bank assumed the liquidity situation of the banks was healthv

Reflecting on yesterday's hue and cry, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Executive Director de Debapriya Bhattacharya said, "It is

teargas shells and rubber bullets. The **OUR CORRESPONDENT**, Kushtia police chased the opposition men and charged batons indiscriminately

leaving over 12 persons injured. In a few minutes, the clash spread near the AL central office on Bangabandhu Avenue when demonstrators started hurling stones at the police from rooftops. The police obbed teargas shells at the AL office and dispersed the protesters from the area after 30 minutes of chase and

counter-chase. Top opposition leaders, including Dr Kamal Hossain, Tofail Ahmed, Abdul Jalil, Rashed Khan Menon, Saifuddin Ahmed Manik. Mainuddir Khan Badal, Obaidul Quader, Dilip Barua, Enamul Haque and Mofazze Hossain Chowdhury Maya

addressed the mammoth rally. The opposition leaders told the rally that by imposing the ban on a democratic way of protest, the government is forcing the country towards a chaotic

situation Around 12:00 noon, leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the AL, locked in a violent clash with the police near Doyel Chattar as the law enforcers prevented them from proceeding vards the secretariat. Dispersed as the police charged

baton on the procession, the BCL activists regrouped in the surrounding areas and again locked in clashes with the police. A group of BCL leaders and activists managed to hold a brief rally near Doyel Chattar but ultimately came under police attack. The sporadic clashes left at least 20 BCL men, five policemen and two

journalists injured. The agitated BCL activists damaged at least three vehicles in front of

#### the Bangla Academy and assaulted a police officer. Clashes also erupted near the Paltan intersection as the police attacked an opposition demonstration led by AL leaders Asaduzzaman Noor hahjahan Khan and Shahara Khatun at 1:00pm. Five people were injured in

the clashes. The senior opposition leaders later brought the situation under control. The police also barricaded the

Matsya Bhaban intersection to prevent an opposition procession from advancing towards the secretariat around 11:00am.

The opposition procession led by central leaders Mohammad Nasim, Prof Abu Sayeed, Dr Hasan Mahmud, Dr Abdur Razzak and Lt Col (retd) Faruk Khan sat there and held a protesting the police obstruction. **JOURNALIŠT INJURED** 

During the sit-in programme, the police assaulted Zakir Hossain, staff correspondent of the daily Amar Desh, near the Jatiya Press Club area. Zakir said he was going to office

from his home near the press club when the riot police stopped him. As they asked to see his identity card, Zakir showed them his accreditation card. The law enforcers then asked him

where his camera was and then started to beat him indiscriminately. **APRIL 19 SIT-IN** Opposition alliance Coordinator and

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil yesterday evening said the 14-party Il stage a two-hour sit-in in front of the PMO on April 19 from 11:00am Vowing to force the government to

Rural Development (LGRD) resign, Jalil told the press after a Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, meeting of the alliance at the AL Dhanmondi office that the opposition Health Minister Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain, Agriculture will go for continuous strikes if the Minister MK Anwar and Social government tries to resist the sit-in. Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Jalil said the alliance will also Mohammad Mujaheed were presmonstrate agitation programmes ent in the meeting across the country today in protest of The opposition's anti-government yesterday's police attack that injured movement was also extensively around 200 opposition men. discussed at the meeting. The alliance will take up mass On March 22, Abdul Jalil wrote a contact programmes in districts and upazilas during April 3-13, he added. letter to Bhuivan asking for clarification on some of the points in Bhuiyan's letter that was sent to AL on March 20 seeking names for the committee Govt pushes

#### 3 SoEs propose Outlaws kill 1, blasts injure 3

NEWS

#### FROM PAGE 1

Khulna and Meherpur yesterday.

edly belonging to an outlawed party

killed a man at Khejurtala in the

identify the 28-year-old deceased.

our Kushtia correspondent reports.

Locals found his body in a pair of

ieans on a field and informed police.

severely injured as a bomb they had

earlier got in a dustbin went off

around 10:45am on BL College road

in Daulatpur in Khulna City, our staff

His right arm was blown off in the

explosion while Jonny received

severe splinter injuries. KMCH

doctors said both are in a critical

In Meherpur, Naria Begum, 37,

wife of Nabis Uddin of Dorbeshpur

in Sadar upazila, was severely

njured when a bomb went off in her

house around 9:30am, says our

touched the bomb unaware that it

was a bomb while doing her chores

blown off and she received severe

injuries to her face. She was admit-

ted to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab)

Rab sources said Kalu is a cadre

of the outlawed Purba Banglar

Communist Party (PBCP)

his counterpart in BNP Abdul

The meeting decided that the

committee, which will comprise 10 to 12

members, will include both MPs and

non-MPs as well as members from the

do not have representations in

parliament, will now have a place in

the committee alongside the four-

party alliance partners Jamaat-e-

Finance Minister M Saifur

Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP).

Mannan Bhuiyan on March 22.

allies of both BNP and AL

arrested Kalu Kha of the village,

also nephew of Naria, in connection

According to police, Naria

Her left arm and left eye were

Kushtia correspondent.

correspondent in Khulna reports.

for treatment.

condition.

at home

for treatment.

with the bomb planting.

Janajuddha faction

FROM PAGE 1

Islami.

**BNP's reply** 

Meanwhile, two boys were

Sadar upazila. Police could not

Besides reducing the gas supply shortfall, the first-ever joint venture Criminals killed a man in exclusively of state-owned enter-Chuadanga while two boys and a prises (SOEs) will also enhance woman were severely injured in two their production, management and separate explosion incidents in other technical skills and capabilities, a high official of the ministry In Chuadanga, criminals alleg observed.

He said a large amount of money at the Petrobangla companies is lying idle, which can be profitably invested in developing Begumganj Gas Field.

According to the preliminary estimates, the project will be able to supply gas to the national grid at a price as low as Tk 50 per thousand cubic feet (mcf), while the lowest price rate of any international oil company (IOC) is Tk 122, he added. Of the project partners, BGFCL

The injured Forkan, 10, and and SGFL will invest Tk 150 crore Jonny, 9 were admitted to Khulna each. Bapex, which owns the field, Medical College Hospital (KMCH) will not invest any money but will be the working partner in charge of Police said the bomb exploded operations. when Forkan tossed it unwittingly.

The project will seek VAT (valueadded tax) and duty exemption from the finance ministry, like the IOCs eniov. sources said.

A 5-member joint management committee comprising two BGFCL, two SGCL and one Bapex representatives will run the project.

An energy ministry official said earlier three IOCs had expressed interest to develop and operate Begumganj Gas Field under joint venture, but the ministry decided to award the gas field almost ready for production to the joint venture of SOEs.

Bapex explored the gas field in 1976-78 and put the amount of proven gas reserve in its first and second wells at 32.7bcf.

Currently five companies--BGFCL, SGFL, Bapex, Shell Bangladesh Exploration and Development BV and Unocal Bangladesh Ltd--are producing gas in the country. Of them, BGFCL, SGFL and Bapex are subsidiaries of the state oil and gas agency Petrobangla, and Shell and Unocal are IOCs operating under produc-

tion sharing contracts (PSCs). BGFCL operates eight gas fields--Titas, Habiganj, Bakhrabad, Narsingdi, Meghna, Begumganj Feni and Kamta

SGFL runs five gas fields-Sylhet, Kailashtila, Rashidpur, Beanibazar and Chhatak, and also Haripur Oil Field, Of them, Chhatak Gas Field and Haripur Oil Field are now out of production.

The third SOE, Bapex, operates Saldanadi, Fenchuganj and Shahbazpur gas fields.

Shell is producing gas in the offshore Sangu Gas Field. It also operates two other gas fields --Semutang and Kutubdia. Kutubdia is also an offshore field discovered in the 1970s.

The other IOC, Unocal operates Jalalabad, Maulavibazar and Bibiyana gas fields. Of them, only Jalalabad Gas Field is in production.

Officials at the EC Secretariat

ruling BNP lawmaker on Monday,

the Appellate Division of the

leave to appeal petition against the

High Court directives on voter list

will remain adjourned until disposa

The next hearing on the matter

After publication of the draft list,

the EC will need at least four months

more stages like accepting objec-

tions and disposing those of by

appointing revising authorities will

follow. The commission in its origi-

nal schedule had kept four months

of the contempt issue.

will be held on April 9.

for these two jobs.

Supreme Court said the CEC's

## Voter-listing hangs

not fixed

#### FROM PAGE 1

published a year before the election of 2001. But whether the list for the had said the EC would not timetable 2007 general election will be pubthe publication of the draft and final lished on time is still uncertain. comes out.

"We don't know when the dates for publication of draft and final voter lists will be set as the matter is still pending with the court." a senior official of the EC Secretariat told The Daily Star yesterday.

A number of district election officers however told The Daily Star vesterday that they would still be Abdul Jalil's letter, which was sent to working to complete the job the time limit for which ran out yesterday.

"Collection of information about the prospective voters who had been left out had already stopped as the enumerators and supervisors were not given the remuneration for the job. And we are afraid a signifi-Consequently, AL's allies, who cant number of people eligible to vote could not make it on the draft list," a district election officer told The Daily Star, wishing anonymity.

Islamic Oikya Jote and The work of preparing the fresh voter list began on January 1 amid controversy and legal dispute. The Rahman, Local Government and draft roll was originally scheduled to be published on February 28 while the final list was to be published on June 1. The entire field level task includ-

3 get death for ing preparation of the draft list was killing teacher scheduled for completion by February 21

#### **Outages back** Free militants in Rajshahi FROM PAGE 1 after PM's visit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshah

Rajshahi was plunged into the woes of power outage yesterday as the entire North Bengal region suffered 200 MW load-shedding

Against a 616 MW power demand the Power Development Board (PDB) managed to supply only 144 MW from two Baghabari units and 150 MW from the eastern sources.

"We had to cut power supplies as there was no fresh generation of power," said a senior PDB official of Rajshahi Zone.

There was, however, no loadshedding in Rajshahi for 24 hours on Wednesday during Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's day long visit.

PDB sources said the power situation deteriorated as two 125 MW power units at Barapukuria in Dinaipur tripped on Tuesday. The situation eased a bit in the early hours vesterday when one of the two coal-based units resumed operation.

Another unit that started operation on test in January and tripped at the end of February would start functioning today, they added.

Both the coal-based Barapukuria units went out of operation following technical faults in the 'evacuation line, said PDB sources.

## Robber killed in 'shootout'

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A notorious robber was killed in crossfire during a "shootout" between Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and his accomplices in Beanibazar upazila in Sylhet early vesterday.

The elite force arrested the rolls before the result of the appeal robbery gang leader Chunnu Miah, 40, along with three others earlier Meanwhile, after issuing a suo after a robbery at a house in moto contempt rule against the chief Kakordia of Beanibazar upazila. election commissioner (CEC) and a

A Rab team along with Chunnu went to Sodakhal to recover the loot and weapons where Chunnu's accomplices opened fire on the team forcing Rab to retaliate. Chunnu died on the spot as he was bullet-hit while trying to escape.

Earlier on Wednesday a gang attacked the house of expatriate Helaluddin. They took gold and money in local and foreign currencies from the house. The robbers before publishing the final roll. Two also beat up family members injuring six of them.

> A Rab contingent arrested the four including Chunnu on Sylhet-Jakiganj highway on the same day and recovered some of the booty from them. The four admitted their complicity with the robbery to Rab. Beanibazar police also arrested five others in connection with the same incident.

ordered the investigation officer (IO) of while a Dhaka court remanded two Majlish-e-Shura members Abdul Awal an August 17 bomb blast case to submit immediately the probe report against Ataur Rahman Sunny and nine

DHAKA FRIDAY MARCH 31, 2006

Sunny, also military commander of JMB. and Abdul Awal for another seven others, reports our court correspondays. The law enforcers in Rangpur have dent. arrested a Jamaat-e-Islami activist on Alam passed the order saying that

charge of his involvement with the panned Islamist militant outfit JMB. MYMENSINGH Bangla Bhai was produced before the

cognisance court of Magistrate Atiqur Rahman at about 11:30 am vesterdav amid tight security with police seeking a 10-day remand for further interrogation in an explosives case. The court granted the remand.

placed him on a 10-day remand.

Ali from a house in Takerhat of

Bishnapur union ofunder Badrganj

upazila on Wednesday night, accord-

ng to a report from our Rangpur corre-

picked up a retired army man, Shamsul

Islam, 50, from a house at Botpara in

Ramnathour union of the same

upazila, suspecting his links to JMB,

District Jamaat Ameer Bellal

but denied his

Hossain admitted that Haider is a

A Dhaka court yesterday again

The elite anti-crime force also

March 6.

RANGPUR

spondent.

recently

DHAKA

Jamaat member

nvolvement with JMB.

The second-in- command of JMB Tejgoan Police Station on August 17 was later taken to Dhaka for interrogalast vear tion, reports our Mymensingh corre-**CHARGE-SHEETS OF THREE** spondent. CASES Earlier, three cases were filed

Rab yesterday pressed charges against him with Muktagachha Police Station. Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) against five JMB members in three lodged the cases after he and his cases filed with Uttara Police Station on bodyguard Masud were arrested on January 5.

The accused in the cases are On March 21, the same court Wahidul Islam, 20, Shafigul Islam, 30, Hafez Ibrahim, 30, Abdullah Al Faruq, 21, and Hanif, 22. Rab-5 arrested Jamaat activist Haider

Metropolitan Magistrate Shamsul

since the IO did not submit the probe

the Criminal Procedure Code, he is

being asked to do so immediately

Earlier, the same court on March 9

Explosive Substances Act with

The case was filed under the

gave the same directive to the IO.

report of the case under Section 173 of

#### THREE LAWYERS TO DEFEND A JMB MAN

Three lawyers of Dhaka Bar Association --Mozammel Haq, Golam Kibria and Lutfor Rahman-- on Wednesday moved a bail petition on behalf of JMB member Shamsul Hag alias Shamsu in connection with an August 17 bomb blast case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mamun Al Rashid rejected the bail petition.

but released him after several hours. Rab said Haider is a JMB activist. Locals however said he is a Jamaat Shamsu was arrested from his worker but his recent activities were nouse at Lake Circus Road in the city's mysterious. He was missing for several nanmondi area on March 15. months and returned to the village

Earlier, two other lawyers Shahadat Hossain Bachchu and Abdul Alim Fakir of the same Bar association were assaulted by lawyers of Gazipur and Chittagong bar associations as they went there for defending .IMB members

Iran given 30 days

FROM PAGE 20 AEA governing board and calls for an IAEA report within 30 days.

Iran responded by formally offering to set up a "regional consortium" to Tehran vehemently denies the enrich fuel for its nuclear programme. charge and says its nuclear program is purely peaceful.

"One possibility to resolve the issue could be the establishment of a regional consortium on fuel cycle development," Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki told the UN Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

He said the consortium, which he FROM PAGE 20 situated on this playground," said a top official of the DCC requesting anonymmplied would be based in Iran, could involve "countries which have already developed fuel cycle programmes at the national level and intend to develop further their programme for civilian purposes. who had organised a Boishakhi Mela (fair) on the ground, to immediately

Iran's UN ambassador Javad Zarif said earlier that any attempt to coerce Iran would backfire

"We have made it clear that Iran doesn't want nuclear weapons," Zarif said, but also warned: "We are allergic to pressure and intimidation and we do not respond well to that."

Germany called the talks in Berlin to map out a long-term strategy on how to contend with Iran's refusal to Architects Bangladesh (IAB) and under the playground protection laws. halt uranium enrichment. which could be used to build a nuclear bomb.

Rahman Babul said he has rented out Besides Rice, the working lunch the playground under political pressure. brings together German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier. 'I had no other alternative but to do so.'

Douste-Blazy said he hoped the

the authorities slapped a ban on rallies

and meetings to foil the opposition

government employees did not go to their offices to make it a three-day

Police put up barbed wire barri-

cades at different points including

Matsya Bhaban, High Court intersec-

tion, Zero Point, Abdul Gani Road,

Segunbagicha and BMA Bhaban

lanes, Bijoynagar, and Baitul

private buses, and other motorised and

non-motorised vehicles to ply the roads

and lanes around the secretariat to

Many office-goers alleged that the

Since morning the 14-party opposi-

police did not allow them to enter the

restricted area even after seeing their

tion combine leaders and workers

gathered at different entry points and

staged sit-in and rallies near the police

the passengers to get out of the vehi-

police did not allow me to cross the

barbed wire barricade put up there,"

said Mohammad Sayeed. "I waited

there for several hours and then came

Some government employees

"It was 11:00 in the morning when I

even alleged that the police obstructed

was returning to office after an official

meeting outside the secretariat. But I

could not secure permission from

police," an employee of food and

disaster management ministry,

requesting anonymity, told The Daily

The residents in the areas near the

secretariat also suffered as many of

them were not allowed to go to markets

or banks. Students could not go to their

their entering the secretariat.

Paltan and Gulistan areas.

They did not allow public and

holiday including the weekend.

Mukarram North Gate.

ward off any trouble.

identity cards.

barricades

back."

schools.

However, a considerable number of

Commuters

FROM PAGE 1

programme.

Washington and European powers believe Iran has ambitions of building a nuclear bomb. which they argue would destabilise the entire region.

BCL convention

Following a case filed in 2004, the

HC ordered the then industries minister

remove all materials from there and

stop the fair. It also asked the DCC to

take steps to protect the playground for

sports only. The DCC then stopped

issuing permission for events other than

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa),

The case was filed by the Institute of

President of Dhanmondi Club Iliasur

an expression of mismatch between aggregate demand and investable surplus. Since the government has not got enough foreign aid as projected, it has probably exhausted its limits for borrowing from banks and possibly resorted to reverse Repo to meet its expenditure demand."

"Given the general shortage in liquidity in the financial sector," he went on, "the Bangladesh Bank needs to meet its quarterly monetary target set by the IMF, resulting in such a situation.

According to Debapriya, "This shows the mismatch between the fiscal and monetary policies. The central bank is also possibly trying to protect the value of taka and has thus mopped up the resources. One has to take a deeper look at the aggregate demand, management and the complimentality between the monetary and fiscal policies."

#### 7 more officials FROM PAGE 20

Nasiruddin, deputy general manager of Barisal region, acknowledged the suspension.

The officials are Shahidul Huq, human resources officer at head office and former deputy general manager in charge of Barisal region, Humayun Kabir, second officer of Nathullabad bus terminal branch, Habibur Rahman Khan, senior officer of Sadar Road branch and former officer of Nathullabad branch, Shah Alam, cash officer of Nathullabad branch. Abdur Rob. senior principal officer, Habibur Rahman Biswas, principal officer of audit and inspection cell, and Abdul Khalek, inspection officer and former manager of Sadar Road branch.

Earlier, the authorities suspended Shamsur Rahman and Makbul Hossain, manager and senior officer of Nathullabad branch, and filed a case against them in this connection.

Official sources said Abdur Rob and Habibur Rahman, officers of audit and inspection cell, have been suspended due to their failure to detect the irregularities.

They however claimed they could not find out the irregularities due to insertion of fake account adjustment reports and related documents by the branch officials during their audit.

15 hurt as JCD factions clash at RU

**RU CORRESPONDENT** 

At least 15 persons, including four policemen and a journalist, were injured in a clash between the law enforcers and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists on Rajshahi University

ossain Nipu around 4:30pm.

Earlier in the morning, JCD follow-ers of Golam Kabir beat up Masud over mmittee

aliate the attack on their leader, but Nipu took shelter at the police camp. As the law enforcers prevented

them from capturing Nipu, the JCD cadres led by Miron and Romel attacked them. The policemen called for reinforce-

the JCD activists equipped with brickbats and iron rods. Later, the JCD men assaulted RU

Proctor Prof Enamul Haque and damaged his vehicle for allowing the police to set up the camp on the cam-

AliAsgar Khokon, RU correspondent of the Daily Janata, mercilessly. He was admitted to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital (RMCH).

Masud Rana, Abdur Razzak-1 and Abdur Razzak-2--were admitted to police hospital

for attacking the police.

**FROM PAGE 1** "The opposition has declared sit-in demonstration in front of the secretariat, but the BNP-led alliance government blocked the roads around the secretariat in a bid to foil

our programme," she said on her arrival at Zia International Airport in the morning. Hasina, also president of the Awami League (AL), returned home after a two-week visit to the United

administration hub.

Election Commission."

Bangabandhu killing case.

senior judges.

his post.'

an issue.

from Washington on March 28. gathering near the country's civil

(RU) campus yesterday. The clash erupted as the JCD faction loyal to RU JCD Convener Masudur Rahman attacked a police camp on the campus while chasing opponent faction member Anwa

mation of the Bangabandhu Hall Masud's supporters chased Nipu to

return to power. So, they are conspiring to rig the upcoming national polls.

ment who charged baton to fight back

During the clash, the police beat up

Injured policemén--Rana Sarkar.

The injured JCD cadres--Masudur Rahman, JCD members Anis Ferdous Ratul, Mahmudul Hasan Miron, Nazmul Alam Bony, Hamidul Islam Nipu and Shankar--were admitted to RMCH and shown arrested in a case

But the EC had failed to complete the enumeration by January 31, the deadline set in the first schedule

declared on December 7 last year. Time limit for the task was first extended on January 31 for 20 more days. Later it was extended several times, but the dates for publication of the draft and final voter lists were

## Bandage left FROM PAGE 20 The foreign object was removed

through another operation at the RMCH nine days ago. But her condition is still deteriorating so fast that she often faints, said Dr Farhana, assistant register of RMCH ward no. 14.

The director of the hospital said, "It bleeds inside her abdomen and we suspect infection has set in inside. She is now in a critical condi-States for the treatment of her ears. tion.

Earlier on February 27, Roksana She left Dhaka on March 16 for the United States and went to London was rushed to the RMCH as her labour pain became acute. But the She said the government has concerned department of the hospital allegedly did not pay attention to made successful the opposition's programme by slapping a ban on her.

A person, who has been identified by her relatives as a middle-Criticising the Wednesday's man, showed up and persuaded emarks of Prime Minister Khaleda them to take her to City Hospital, a Zia at the Rajshahi divisional rally of private clinic near the RMCH west gate.

the BNP, Hasina said on one hand Her mother said a few days after the government sends letter for she was released from the clinic, discussion, but on the other it says Roksana began to suffer from acute the opposition's demand for elecpain in her abdomen. But they could toral reforms is a pretext for creating not immediately afford further treatment for her after paying the She said: "Khaleda Zia knows that without vote rigging they won't clinic Tk 9.000.

They took her to Gangachara Upazila Health Complex on March 19 from where she was referred to the RMCH.

"No free and fair election will be possible under the next caretaker Roksana's husband Anwarul of government headed by Justice KM Purba Kouchua in Gangachara Hasan," Hasina said, adding, "So, upazila claimed his wife is dying due to the callousness and insincerity of the opposition wants to reform the caretaker government and the the surgeon.

He also claimed three people She said Justice Hasan is a came to the RMCH ward from the relative of a killer of Bangabandhu clinic two days ago and took away Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and felt the clinic's discharge letter and embarrassed to conduct the prescriptions.

"They lied to me. They said an Referring to the extension of the RMCH doctor wanted to see the retirement age of the judges, Hasina papers. I am an illiterate man. I said the government purposely could not understand that they extended the retirement age of came to take away the papers to destroy proofs that she was operated there " Pointing to the Supreme Court's

show cause notice upon the Chief The surgeon, a private practitio-Election Commissioner (CEC) ner, acknowledged that she oper-Hasina said: "If the CEC has shame, ated on Roksana but could not say for sure if she left the foreign part he should immediately resign from nside her abdomen

## after rape

#### COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced three people to death for murdering a woman after rape in the city's Pallabi area in March 2004.

Judge AR Masud of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 handed down the sentence in presence of the convicts --Nazrul Islam and Mojibur Rahman, while Habibur Rahman was tried in absentia.

Nineteen other accused were acquitted of charges.

The complainant, however, expressed dissatisfaction over the judgement saying that some of the culprits responsible for her daughter's death were acquitted of charges.

In his order, the judge said the convicts were given punishment on the basis of Nazrul's confessional statement and circumstantial evidence. The convicts can appeal to the High Court against the verdict within 30 days of receiving the judgement

copy, the judge added. Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 17 prosecution witnesses.

On March 11, 2004, six youths allegedly led by Habibur Rahman of Pallabi abducted and gang-raped 25year-old Fatema Akhter Kohinoor, a teacher, and then burnt her to death at an abandoned poultry farm in the area. Following the incident, victim's

mother Almida Khatun filed a case with Pallabi Police Station under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act accusing six people the

next day The investigation officer pressed charges against Habibur Rahman and 21 others on July 7 the same year.

Victim's mother Almida Khatun told the journalists at the courtroom yesterday that in his confessional statement to Metropolitan Magistrate Abdur Rouf Khan, Nazrul also mentioned names of Shafigul Islam Safu, Abul Kalam Azad, Sumon, Boro Babu, Chhoto Babu and five to six unknown people as the rapists of the victim, but only Mojibur, Habibur and Nazrul were convicted for the incident.

Advocate SMA Sabur conducted the case on behalf of the complainant while advocates Syed Rezaur Rahman and Abul Kalam Azad defended the accused.

that the government can find it reasonable and reconsider its position." a Tata official involved in the negotiation said.

"We want to submit the report so

Tata

FROM PAGE 20

Meanwhile, the government policy chief Javier Solana. negotiators ruled out any possibility meeting would display "the unity and of signing an agreement with the resolve of the international commu-Tata Group agreeing to a lower rate nity" of gas price.

"We must not agree to gas price which is less than the base price. They [Tata] must propose a price higher than \$2.35 for per thousand cubic feet (MCF) to initiate further negotiation," a top negotiatior said preferring anonymity.

He said the Indian group will have to give additional amount of money if it wants a guarantee for uninterrupted supply of gas.

Earlier, the second-phase of the fourth round negotiations on February 6 and 7 had ended with disagreements between the two parties on several issues.

Tata on April 20 last year formally submitted the \$2.5 billion investment proposal for setting up a 1000 MW power plant, a steel mill with an annual production capacity of 420,000 tonne and a one milliontonne capacity fertiliser unit in Bangladesh.

On May 9, they agreed to start formal negotiations on May 25 and wind it up by August 31 to clear the way for signing of the investment agreement before November 30. But they had to review their set dateline due to complications in the process.

## Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 20 Commission last November to deal with the issue. But the body has been dogged by criticism.

The World Bank said Bangladesh has recorded impressive economic and social gains in the past decade, outperforming most other low-income countries.

But "there are also serious governance weaknesses across sectors and in core government functions. Addressing these is critical for improving the investment climate and enhancing growth," it said

It added that over the next four years the bank's loans would target mproving the investment climate liberalising trade, improving the competitiveness of key industries, empowering the poor and reducing administrative barriers.

Residents of the areas have reacted Jack Straw of Britain, Philippe Doustesharply and said political leaders should Blazy of France, Sergei Lavrov of have thought about children who use Russia, Chinese deputy foreign the playground. minister Dai Bingguo and EU foreign

sports

One resident, Suraiya Begum, said, "You see Kalabagan playground is often rented out to different organisations, now they have rented out Dhanmondi playground. Where shall our children play?"

Kamal Majumdar Swapan, a resi-dent of Kathalbagan, said hundreds of youngsters are frequently deprived of their right to use the playground due to some "greedy officials" in-charge of the

playground. "Every time there is a similar event on the playground and the entire pitch becomes potholed, exposing children to serious hazards," Swapan said.

President of Bapa Mohidul Haque Khan condemned allowing events other than sports on the playground and said Bapa had formally requested all authorities concerned not to allow this

DCC Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka is now on a visit to Spain. Acting Mayor Hossain Mollah said he would look into the matter urgently.

### Opposition FROM PAGE 1

School at Sagoria in Hatia yesterday. In the capital, the Awami League (AL)-led opposition combine tried to stage a sit-in outside the country's civil administration hub yesterday and

clashed with police. Criticising the AL's various "anti-people" and "anti-development" acts, All the buses from Elephant Road and Farmgate were seen taking U-turn at Shahbagh in the morning, forcing the prime minister said the party has been trying to oust the coalition gov-ernment since its assumption of office. cles and walk towards the secretariat, "On way to my office at Gulistan, I walked up to Matsya Bhaban, but

"But the people did not respond to their call for toppling the democratically elected government," she told the

rally. The prime minister said when the country is advancing towards prosperty and foreign investment is coming in a bigger way, the opposition has resorted to vandalism, arson and damaging public property to halt the progress.

She urged people to vote for the BNP-led alliance in the next general elections to continue the trend of development and make Bangladesh a prosperous and self-reliant country.

Describing the opposition's "reign of terror" while in power, she said they had created godfathers in every district of the country who unleashed repression on BNP leaders and workers.

"They also supplied illegal arms to their men to establish a reign of terror and people wanted to get rid of their repression," she said.

"Downtown Dhaka virtually turned into an area under siege that seriously hampered regular activities of people commented an advocate of the High Court.