

**RUPALI LOAN SCANDAL
7 more officials
suspended**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Seven more Rupali Bank officials of the Nathullabad branch have been suspended in connection with the irregularities in sanctioning Tk 25 crore loans to 16 BNP leaders.

Bank sources said a letter signed by the bank's general manager (head office) suspending the officials reached Barisal on March 29.

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Prayer Timing		
March 31		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-20
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-20	6-25
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

**Iran given 30 days to
stop nuke activities**

UN body unanimously okays statement

AFP, Berlin

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called yesterday for a long-term strategy to thwart Iran's suspected nuclear arms ambitions as major powers met in Berlin after a UN Security Council breakthrough.

The 15-member Security Council on Wednesday unanimously approved a non-binding statement giving Iran 30 days to abandon its uranium enrichment activities, ending a weeks-long impasse.

"We've had tactical differences and this gives us the chance to stay

together as we move forward," Rice said en route from Washington after the Security Council deal, a compromise struck after weeks of haggling, notably with Russia.

"When you are taking a first step, the unity of ... the Security Council is extremely important."

The talks in Berlin bring together Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States -- the United Nations Security Council's five veto-wielding permanent members (P-5) -- plus Germany, one of three European powers that have pursued nuclear talks with Tehran.

The UN talks had been marred

by differences between the United States and its Western allies on the one hand and Russia and China on the other over how to coax Tehran away from sensitive nuclear research.

The statement that finally prevailed is a watered-down version of a Franco-British statement that calls on Iran to meet demands from the UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

It expresses clear concern that Iran is trying to acquire nuclear weapons secretly, demands that Iran comply with the wishes of the

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The deserted streets surrounding the Bangladesh Secretariat in the capital. Police barricaded all roads leading to the government's administrative hub ahead of the 14-party opposition combine's sit-in programme yesterday.



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Announcement

We would like to thank all the readers who are sending in their valuable comments and views on the CPD, Prothom Alo and The Daily Star supported civil society initiative for an accountable development process in the context of the upcoming elections. Starting from Saturday, April 1, we will print readers' comments on "An accountable development

process and the national election 2007," and the need to elect "clean candidates" in The Daily Star. In the coming weeks we will continue printing your comments written within a word-limit of 500. We again invite you to participate in this forum and make your voice count in our democracy.

-Editor



PHOTO: STAR

A worker digs a hole in Dhanmondi Playground in the capital yesterday as a pandal is being erected for the national council of Bangladesh Chhatra League.

**VIOLATION OF HC ORDER
Playground rented out
for BCL nat'l council**

MORSHED ALI KHAN

Defying a High Court (HC) order and appeals from local residents and environmentalists, Dhanmondi Club authorities have rented out Dhanmondi playground to Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), which has started digging up the ground to set up a large pandal for its national council.

Workers were digging hundreds of holes in the ground yesterday to install bamboo poles for erecting the pandal, where children from Dhanmondi, Kathalagan and Kalabagan used to play every day. Cricket and football matches also took place in the ground regularly. But since Tuesday, the playground has been virtually taken over by workers,

who have piled up bamboo poles there.

About 50,000 activists of the BCL will join the two-day council beginning on April 3, said Liaqat Shikder, president of the student body.

He said they were refused a space at Paltan Maidan for the council.

"We then asked the government to give us an alternative space but it did not. So, we took permission of Dhanmondi Club authorities," he added.

But DCC officials said Dhanmondi Club has no authority to rent the field out to anyone. "The playground belongs to the DCC and only it can rent it out. Dhanmondi Club itself is illegally

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**Bandage left
in woman's
abdomen
after surgery**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

'Dereliction of duty' by a surgeon has left a woman dying at Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH) with a critical wound in her abdomen after she underwent an operation at a private clinic a month ago.

Surgeon Farida Khanom Rosi operated on Rokhsana Begum on February 28 but accidentally left a piece of dressing cloth inside her abdomen.

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**Bangladesh to get \$3b
from WB in 2006-09**

AFP, Dhaka

The World Bank said yesterday it would lend three billion dollars to Bangladesh through 2009 and would put good governance at the heart of its aid programme.

The country assistance strategy for Bangladesh was approved Wednesday by the World Bank Board, the lender said in a statement.

"The (strategy) puts governance at centre stage. Governance will be the core focus in every sector we engage, and sector governance

reform will be the target of every bank-supported project," country director Christine Wallich said in the statement.

Bangladesh, where nearly half the 140 million population lives on less than a dollar a day, was placed at the bottom of graft watchdog Transparency International's corruption list last month for the fifth year in a row.

Under pressure from multilateral lending agencies such as the World Bank, Bangladesh set up an independent Anti-Corruption

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**\$2.5B INVESTMENT
Tata to submit
review report
early April**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tata Group yesterday informed Bangladesh government that it will submit a review report on its \$2.5 billion investment plan by the first week of next month.

The Indian industrial giant was supposed to submit the report by the end of March. Sources in the Tata Group said the submission of the report is being delayed as they are making some corrections in their investment proposal.

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