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## KANSAT VIOLENCE

# Cops raid villages at night, 6 more killed

### Houses ransacked; journalists barred from visiting villages, threatened; situation turns eruptive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Six people including a 10-year-old boy were killed yesterday and about 300 others injured in Kansat as police went on rampage in a dozen villages in the dark of the night, vandalising and burning houses and beating up villagers to quell their movement for a smooth power supply.

Locals alleged police looted many houses and assaulted even women and girls of the villages they raided on in the trouble-torn Shibganj upazila in Chapainawabganj district.

The law enforcers fired several hundred bullets, rubber bullets and tear gas canisters to disperse demonstrators who took to the roads, defying the Section 144 enforced last Sunday, protesting attacks on them by the police and ruling BNP cadres and demanding fulfilment of their 14-point demand.

Police also arrested 29 people yesterday, the sixth day of the



Power-starved people of Kansat, left, with sticks in hand continue protests yesterday defying section 144 imposed by the local administration; farmers and housewives, right, also take to the street to join the demonstration.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

## POLLS REFORM TALKS

# BNP writes to AL not to interfere in its member selection

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the government high-ups having decided not to sit in a dialogue without Jamaat-e-Islami, the ruling BNP yesterday in a letter asked the Awami League (AL) not to interfere in nomination of its representatives in the proposed committee.

"We do not have any say about who will participate in the dialogue

on your part and it will not be appropriate to impose your opinion about who will participate from our part," BNP Secretary General and LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said in the letter to the AL general secretary.

The BNP for the third time sought the names of opposition members to constitute the proposed committee to discuss the

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## BDR, BSF trade shells, bullets at Patgram

### 1 killed in 7-hour skirmish

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One Bangladeshi was killed and four injured in a seven-hour gun-battle between Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) at the Patgram frontiers in Lalmonirhat yesterday.

Inhabitants of around 15 villages on the Bangladesh side left the area as both the sides exchanged mortar shells and at least 500 round bullets, BDR

sources said.

BDR sources in Dhaka said the BSF first opened fire when the BDR protested its building of a camp within 150 yards of the border.

The Bangladesh border security had earlier protested the construction of the camp on Tuesday and asked the BSF to sit and discuss the matter. This stopped the BSF move to set up the camp.

The BSF, however, resumed the construction yesterday paying no heed to the BDR protest. They

suddenly opened fire on the BDR camp at Kuchlibari of Patgram around 5:00pm, the BDR sources claimed. The BDR also returned the fire.

At 5:45pm the BSF fired a mortar shell that injured five villagers. The BDR said the injured were taken to hospital where one was declared dead.

According to the BDNEWS, the deceased is Sharfuddin, 40, of Kuchlibari, while the injured are

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## ADP implementation pace 'frustrating'

### Review meet finds only 37pc funds spent in July-Feb

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The pace of Annual Development Programme (ADP) implementation in the first eight months of the current fiscal year (FY) was slower by three percentage points than the corresponding period of FY2004-05.

Despite government's efforts to put up better performance, a review meeting chaired by State Minister for Finance and Planning Anwarul Kabir Talukdar yesterday found the pace of ADP implementation this fiscal year simply "frustrating".

Of the Tk 24,500 crore ADP for FY06, only Tk 9,996 crore or 37 percent was spent in July to February. But, Tk 8,800 crore or 40 percent of the Tk 22,000 crore original ADP was spent in the corresponding period of FY05.

In July-February of FY06, Tk 5,703 crore or 34 percent was spent of the ADP's local component and Tk 3,393 crore or 45 percent of its foreign component that comes in project aid. In comparison, 40 percent of the ADP's local component and 42 percent of foreign

component were implemented in the corresponding period of FY05.

Yesterday's review meeting, attended by the secretaries of 20 ministries who have received about 81 percent of the current ADP found the utilisation of ADP funds in July to February last by 14 of the ministries was less than that in the corresponding period of FY05.

In spite of serious troubles dogging the production and distribution systems in the power and gas sectors, the ADP project implementation by both power and

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## Karachi suicide blast kills 57

### Pakistan puts army on alert

AFP, Karachi

Pakistani troops were on high alert yesterday for the funeral of a Sunni Muslim leader who was among 57 people killed in the country's worst suicide bombing for nearly two decades.

Police said they were trying to identify the bearded head of the suspected bomber who struck in the port city of Karachi late on Tuesday, as thousands of Sunnis gathered in a park to celebrate the birth of Prophet Hazrat

Mohammed (SM).

No one claimed responsibility for the attack, but there were fears it could start a fresh cycle of sectarian violence between militants from Pakistan's majority Sunni and minority Shia communities.

"The army has been put on alert and can be deployed within minutes if there is any trouble," Salahuddin Haider, spokesman for the government of southern Sindh province, told AFP.

"We have taken all possible

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## Australia come back strongly

SPORTS REPORTER

After two days of Bangladesh dominance and a third day where honours were shared, Australia bounced back with their typical iron nerves against the spirited Tigers. However, the excitement has not yet died down at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium after the end of the fourth day's play in the first Test on Wednesday.

Two late strikes from left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique, who returned with a five-wicket haul in the first innings, gave the absorbing game a surprising twist at the end of the day's play after an all too familiar brittle second innings display by the Tigers.

Chasing 307 runs for victory, Australia finished the day on 212

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## SAARC STANDING BODY MEET

# US, Korea to get observer status

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Saarc Standing Committee on Tuesday agreed in principle to grant the United States and South Korea observer status in the regional

grouping.

"We have responded positively and agreed in principle to the applications made by the US and South Korea seeking observer status in the

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## Australian police plan to set up outpost in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) plans to open an outpost in Bangladesh amidst growing concern that the South Asian country might turn into a 'haven for terrorists', reports ABC news.

AFP will be the first foreign law enforcement agency to have an official presence in Bangladesh, the news agency reports. "Australian authorities are still negotiating with Bangladesh but it is expected

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## Judge Chunnu quits amid political controversy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rezaul Karim Chunnu, Dhaka divisional special judge also former Secretary General of Judicial Services Association, who is facing a High Court injunction directing him not to carry out judicial activities, resigned on March 27 on personal ground.

Sources said Chunnu submitted the resignation letter to the secretary of the law ministry. Accepting his resignation, the

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