

COMMITTED TO  
TO  
People's Right to Know

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XVI NO. 97

DHAKA SUNDAY APRIL 23, 2006

BAISHAKH 10, 1413 BS

RABIUL AWAL 24, 1427 HIJRI

24 PAGES PRICE: TK 7.00

www.thedailystar.net

## New US envoy hopes govt, opposition to talk out differences

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The new US ambassador in Dhaka yesterday expressed her confidence that Bangladesh will once again "flourish" with its democratic tradition with the upcoming elections.

Patricia A Butenis, who arrived here on April 3 and presented her credentials to the president on April 13, hoped that the government and the opposition will talk out their political disagreements and ensure free and fair elections.

The 12th US envoy in Bangladesh at the outset of her tenure yesterday termed Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Ziaur Rahman the two "architects of Bangladesh's independence" and paid her rich tributes to them.

She said the ideals of these two leaders are the resources of the people of this country.

Butenis told reporters that she

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

## Volatile turn in politics shadows reform talks

### 14-party announces 'Dhaka siege' May 21; BNP rallies on Tuesday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prospect of a government-opposition dialogue on electoral reforms appears slim, as the government is still undecided about the composition of its negotiation team and the mainstream opposition camp more inclined to street agitation.

The politics seems to be heading for another bout of confrontation following a week of violence over a youth rally of the main opposition, a 14-party sit-in programme, and hartal, with the Awami League-led 14-party opposition line-up yesterday announcing a Dhaka-siege programme for May 21.

The opposition combine yesterday also announced a set of fresh programmes including rallies and processions in Dhaka and other

parts of the country against price hike of essentials, power crisis, Islamist militancy, unabated corruption, and repression on journalists and opposition members.

The combine enforces a daylong hartal today in protest of what it said were police atrocities on April 19 to foil its sit-in programme in front of the Prime Minister's Office.

Meantime, in Tangail the local chapter of the main opposition Awami League (AL) yesterday locked horn with police protesting an imposition of the Section 144 of Criminal Procedure Code at and around its meeting venue. The clash left about 20 people injured.

The ruling alliance too has gone for a tough stance and announced to face the opposition in the street with counter programmes.

The ruling BNP will stage demonstration rallies across the country Tuesday protesting what it terms the anarchic politics of the opposition, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan announced from a rally in the capital last Friday.

Against this background of frequent police-opposition clashes, political analysts predict more street violence in the coming days.

Sources said the 14-party line-up is focusing more on the ongoing street agitation to keep on pressure on the government, which has only six months remaining of its term.

In regard to the proposed dialogue, analysts say BNP's coalition partner Jamaat-e-Islami stands as a barrier between the AL and BNP.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

## Opposition's dawn-to-dusk hartal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL)-led 14-party opposition combine enforces a countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal today in protest against police atrocities on opposition leaders and workers during the sit-in demonstration in front of the Prime Minister's Office on Wednesday.

The 12-hour shutdown from 6:00am, the second in four days, follows a similar one on Thursday.

The 14-party leaders at a meeting at the AL central office on Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday urged the people to make the hartal a success.

Talking to newsmen later, AL president member Abdur Razzak MP said they would picket at 18 different points in the capital

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

## Nepal opposition rejects king's democracy pledge

### Dozens hurt in clashes as thousands join protests defying curfew

AFP, AP, Kathmandu

At least 100 people were hurt in clashes yesterday as thousands of Nepalis defied a curfew to march on the capital to reject embattled King Gyanendra's offer to return power to the people.

Twelve were in serious condition with bullet wounds and beating injuries, a doctor said, after police fired on thousands of demonstrators as protests neared the heavily defended king's palace in the heart of Kathmandu.

The protesters shouted "The king's address is a sham," "Leaders

don't compromise with the king" and "We want complete democracy." Tens of thousands then moved towards the centre where they were met by a wall of police who charged them with batons and tear gas, forcing them to turn tail leaving hundreds of shoes on the ground, an AFP reporter witnessed.

Many of the injured had head injuries, doctor Sarita Pandey of Kathmandu Model Hospital said.

The protests petered out after

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

## FIRE PANIC 50 injured in stampede at RMG factory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A stampede caused by an electrical spark inside a garment factory in Jatrabari area of the capital yesterday left about 50 people injured as panicked people tried to escape hurriedly suspecting a fire.

The spark occurred at 3:30pm on the seventh floor of eight-storied Sufia Plaza, which houses the garment factory, Mega Tex Limited. The factory is situated on the fifth, sixth and the seventh floor.

The injured victims said they heard a sound of an explosion followed by screams 'fire', 'fire'. "Without wasting any time to check the matter, we ran to the stairs to escape as soon as possible," Shilpi Akhter, an injured machine operator who was working on the seventh floor, told The Daily Star at Dhaka Medical

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

Injured workers lying on mattresses on the floor in a ward at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday due to lack of beds. They were hurt in a fire-triggered stampede at a garment factory in Jatrabari in the capital.

## Criminal killed in 'crossfire'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A listed criminal was killed in "crossfire" during a shootout between police and his accomplices at a 'char' in river Padma under Bagha upazila in Rajshahi early yesterday.

The dead was identified as Sentu alias Killer Sentu alias Sagor, 28, of Korari Nawsara under the same upazila.

Police arrested him on Friday night during a raid on a char at Omarpur under Bagha. During interrogation, Sentu confessed to committing murders and possessing firearms.

Following his confession, a police team took him to the Padma char to retrieve the arms. As soon as they reached a cane field at Khampur Bazar, Sentu's accomplices opened

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

## US attorney confirms Sadeque's extradition Dhaka still keeping mum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A US citizen of Bangladeshi origin, Ehsanul Islam Sadeque, who was picked up on April 17 from the capital, is in the custody of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), BBC Bangla Service reported yesterday.

A US government attorney confirmed to BBC that Sadeque was supposed to be produced before the Federal Court in New York yesterday for his suspected involvement with Islamist militancy. An FBI special agent was supposed to officially press charges against him in the court.

A legal expert in New York in an interview with BBC was surprised by the news of Sadeque's extradition

and said the US does not have any extradition treaty with Bangladesh. Consul General of Bangladesh in New York Kazi Imtiaz Hossain also confirmed to BBC that the US does not have any extradition treaty with Bangladesh. However, he declined to comment on how then Sadeque was extradited to the US.

A US attorney's office told BBC that there had been a warrant issued through Interpol for arrest of Sadeque and possibly he was extradited based on that warrant.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh government and the police authorities continue to keep mum about how Sadeque ended up in FBI custody.

Police officials concerned

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

## Bandits kill Rab man in Tongi

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Robbers stabbed to death a member of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and looted his house in Tongi early yesterday.

The victim, Delwar Hossain, 36, a constable, was working as a driver at the Rab Headquarters.

Some seven robbers carrying sharp weapons called Delwar's father Ludai Mia when the family members were sleeping in their tin-roofed house in Satashgram at around 2:30am yesterday, Delwar's relatives said.

As Ludai came out of his room, the robbers stabbed him several times in the right hand.

Hearing his father's scream, Delwar, who was sleeping in an

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

## Save while you shop



### BRAC Bank Aarong ATM Card

BRAC Bank brings you a Co-branded ATM Card for the first time in Bangladesh. Now, every time you shop at Aarong with this card, get 5% cash back in your BRAC Bank Account. You can also use the card in all BRAC Bank ATMs and POS machines. Let the shopping and savings go on and on...

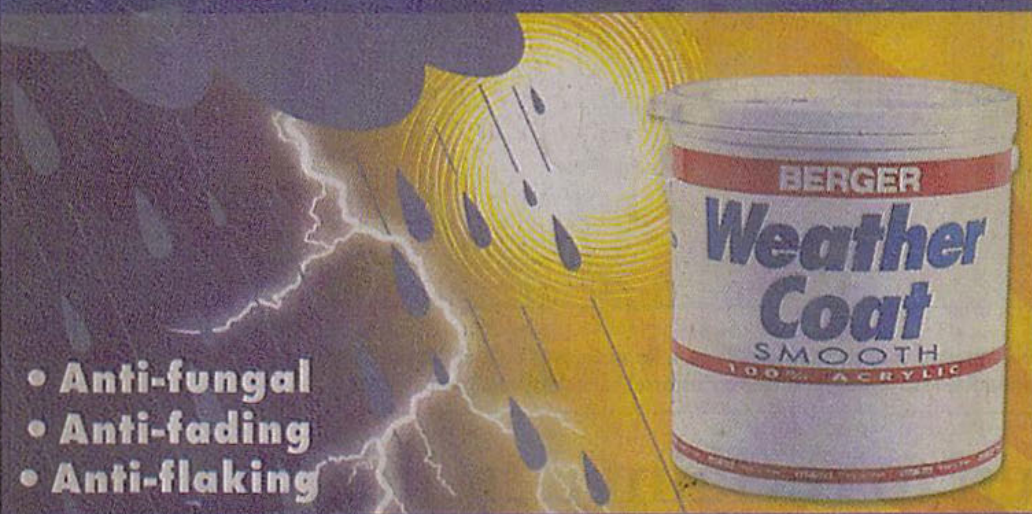


0171-4024246  
0171-4024176

(Open from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.)

**BRAC BANK**  
LIMITED

## One Time Paint for Many Seasons



- Anti-fungal
- Anti-fading
- Anti-flaking

THE SCIENCE OF WEATHERPROOFING

Your desired Bank for attractive & profitable investment as per shariah  
**Shahjalal Islami Bank Limited**

Attractive profit rate (Provisional) offer on your savings during "Special Customer Service Period" on the eve of commencement of 6th year of operation on 10 May 2006.

### Mudaraba Term Deposits

Period	Profit rate (Provisional)
1 Year for Senior Citizens	13.00%
1 Year	12.65%
6 Months	12.60%
3 Months	12.55%
2 Months	11.50%
1 Month	10.50%
Savings Deposit	8.00%
Short Notice Deposit	6.50%

Conditions apply

Moreover different attractive savings schemes are offered

Customers opening account during the period shall enjoy free online facility for 1 year

www.shahjalalbank.com.bd



For further details please contact the nearest branch

**Shahjalal Islami Bank**  
LIMITED

Committed to Cordial Service

## BUS PLUNGE 12 bodies found so far, 23 missing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Twelve bodies have so far been found after a bus carrying 45 people of a wedding party plunged into the river Chitra at Shimkhali ferry point in Narail on Friday.

A Navy forklift pulled the bus ashore early yesterday.

The recovered bodies are of newly wed bride Lipi Biswas, 20, her cousin Pali, 15, Sukanta Basu, 19, Tanusri, 14, Anusri, 9, Silata, 29, Dipti Rani, 30, Arpana Rani, 26, Antu Biswas, 2, Subarni, 15, Swadesh Roy, 55 and Shampa, 14.

The bodies of Lipi and Pali were sent to Manikhar village in Gopalganj Sadar upazila while those of others were taken to Rumdia village under Narail Sadar upazila yesterday.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

## First ODI against Aussies today

BISHWAJIT ROY From Ctg

Bangladesh will take inspiration from their heroic victory against Australia at Cardiff last year when the hosts launch their one-day series campaign against the world champions today.

The first match of the three-ODI series will start at 9:30am at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium with ESPN and state-run Bangladesh Television beaming the live coverage.

A full-house is expected at the 15,000-capacity venue as all tickets have been sold out and there was mad rush for tickets in the port city yesterday.

Habibul Bashar's men lost the preceding Test series 2-0 but there was a reason for the Tigers to be excited as they not only pushed the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5