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**Hasina pledges to curb price hike, militancy if elected**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina yesterday said she would reduce price of everyday essentials, curb militancy, increase power production and bring real infrastructure development in the country if the Awami League (AL)-led 14-party opposition combine is

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

**High security, no aggression**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unlike all previous 14-party alliance programmes, government yesterday ensured the security of the Awami League-led alliance's rally with an army of around 20,000 law enforcers forming a six-tier security system.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

**Paltan overflows with people**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The historic Paltan Maidan seemed too small as a mammoth crowd thronged to join yesterday's grand rally organised by the 14-party opposition combine.

The gathering stretched to Bangabandhu Avenue, Gullistan, Paltan intersection, Nawabpur,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

## Opposition goes all out against Hasan takeover

Hasina asks all to enforce blockade Wednesday, hartal Thursday to realise electoral reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the people to throng the capital from all over the country on the day Justice KM Hasan will assume office as the chief of the next caretaker government, to make the interim government unable to function.

"Come to Dhaka, with whatever you can in your hands, on the day the present government will step down and KM Hasan will assume office without realising our demands. We will see how Hasan-led caretaker government and Aziz-led Election Commission continue functioning," Hasina, also chief of the main opposition Awami League, roared from a mammoth grand rally at Paltan Maidan.

"We will also see how the BNP-Jamaat alliance survives then. We will see what comes out of what if Khaleda Zia hands over power to Justice KM Hasan as the chief of the caretaker government and our demands are not met," Hasina, a

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



A section of the huge opposition grand rally held at Paltan Maidan in the capital yesterday. Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina, inset, addresses the rally.

**POWER OUTAGE**  
RU students block road, vandalise VC's house

RU CORRESPONDENT

Several hundred residential students of different dormitories of Rajshahi University (RU) in a frenzy of outrage over power outages blocked traffic on the Dhaka-Rajshahi highway for two hours and vandalised several campus facilities at midnight Sunday including the residence of the vice chancellor (VC) of the university.

Agrani Bank RU branch, the second administrative building and the power regulatory office were other on-campus targets of the students' wrath.

At around 11:00pm on Sunday, the students built fires with tyres

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

## No respite from power crisis

STAR REPORT

The acute power crisis continues to plague the country with no sign of an immediate respite from load shedding that hovered around 2,200 megawatts yesterday.

According to official count, it was however not more than 1,100MW.

Power Development Board (PDB) sources said that a couple of power units might resume operation within the next week.

Currently, as many as 19 units remain shut down either for technical glitches or for maintenance reasons, slashing the electricity-generating capacity by 867 MW.

The 450-MW unit of Meghnaghat AES, which has been

closed for overhauling, will start functioning later this month.

The 250-MW Barapukuria plant is another major installation that ceased working three days ago due to technical problems. The PDB is not sure when this plant will start working again. The costly coal-fired plant has been tripping frequently since it came into operation earlier this year.

Like the last several days, Dhaka and other parts of the country were experiencing frequent power outages that in some places lasted for about eight hours. Over the last couple of days, the city dwellers have been seeing the worst outages in recent times.

The demand for power in the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

## Top 4 defaulters hold 31pc of total bad loans

10 top banks burdened with Tk 9,031cr classified loans

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC), Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTMC), Aurickshaw Samabay Samity (ASS) and Khulna Newsprint Mills (KNM) are the four top loan defaulters in 10 leading banks of the country.

These four entities using government guarantee to obtain the loans are holding 31 per cent of the

total defaulted loans of Tk 9,031 crore as of March this year, according to Bangladesh Bank (BB) data. Twenty top defaulters, including these four, are responsible for 49 per cent of the total defaulted loans with these banks.

BB's Deputy Governor Mohammad A Rumi Ali at a meeting with these 10 banks asked them to engage special teams for each of the defaulters to speed up recovery of the loans.

Ali noted that many borrowers have simultaneously defaulted on loans with different banks. For instance, Gaffar Food Production Ltd is at once a simultaneous defaulter with the City Bank, Premier, IFIC and Islami banks. He asked the banks to identify such borrowers and notify the central bank about them.

The meeting with the 10 banks was a follow-up of their meeting

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

International Agency & Local Currency Syndicated Financing of  
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for Pacific Bangladesh Telecom Limited

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Bangladesh, September 2006

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**ELECTION 2007**  
EU team seeks security for its observers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The visiting European Union (EU) mission yesterday sought security for its election observers who are likely to visit different polling centres across the country during the next parliamentary election.

Led by Andrew Bruce, the EU delegation met Home Secretary Safar Raj Hossain at the ministry in

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

**AL, BNP go at each other in JS over EC**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliament yesterday experienced a debate between the ruling BNP and main opposition Awami League on the Election Commission's method of work regarding the next general election scheduled for next January.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

এখন সব মিলিয়ে JOY-ই সবার উপরে  
তাই এবার

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