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## Hundreds of vehicles stranded at two ferryghats

By Staff Correspondent

Traffic congestion at Aricha and Kazirhat ferry ghats has severely disrupted movement of vehicles for the last two days.

The congestion was created following an indefinite strike called a few days ago by transport owners in protest against alleged illegal toll collection on the Tangail-Jamuna Bridge route. As a result, vehicles from capital Dhaka have been using Aricha - Kazirhat route to reach northern districts.

Although the strike was called off at around 3pm yesterday, about 600 vehicles, mostly trucks with perishables, have been stranded at Aricha ferry ghat while about 300 trucks at Kazirhat ferry ghat last night. However, there was no traffic congestion at Daulatdia ferry ghat.

When contacted, officials of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) said Page 12 Col 2

## Opposition to observe Protest Day Mar 13

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP-led opposition alliance will observe countrywide "Protest and Demonstration Day" on March 13 because of what they said indiscriminate arrest of its leaders and activists across the country, including Jessore.

It was announced at a meeting of the liaison committee yesterday with BNP vice chairman M Shamsul Islam in the chair. The meeting also demanded immediate release of arrested leaders and activists and withdrawal of "false" cases. The meeting was held at 29

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FEMA—A Case Study

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Globalisation—no master  
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## Prayer Timings

March 11		
Azan	Jamaat	
Fajr	5:30	5:35
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:30	4:35
Maghrib	6:10	6:13
Esha	7:25	7:30

Source: Islamic Foundation

## Paris meet to take note of situation

# Donors deeply disturbed by political intolerance, violence

The donor countries and agencies have expressed grave concern over the "increasing political confrontation and polarisation that is jeopardizing prospects for the country's economic growth and development," reports UNB.

A statement of Bangladesh's Development Partners, delivered Tuesday to the President, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, called for resolving political differences peacefully in forums like Parliament, "not through harsh and violent confrontation."

Australia, Canada, Den-

mark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, USA, Asian Development Bank, Commission of the European Communities and the World Bank are grouped in the Bangladesh Development Partners.

The statement released to the press yesterday said: "Bangladesh's development partners are deeply disturbed by the increasing political confrontation and polarisation that is jeopardizing prospects for the country's economic growth and development."

"Political instability in Bangladesh is inflicting a serious cost on the nation. It has slowed down the economy, disrupted the flow of Bangladesh exports, and prevented Bangladeshis from earning a livelihood for their families and themselves. It exacerbates law and order problems. It discourages domestic and foreign investors."

"The real challenge to Bangladesh is the elimination of poverty. This requires a whole range of reforms in areas such as the financial and legal sectors, the public sector, state-

operated enterprises and in the development of broad-based and effective healthcare and education facilities. With such reform and developments, Bangladesh will move forward."

"Continuing political instability slows reform and seriously diminishes prospects for reducing poverty. It also adversely affects aid flows aimed at poverty alleviation. These issues, and many others, will be examined at the Bangladesh Development Forum meeting in Paris April 19-20."

"Good governance depends

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## PM's directive to admin in Jessore

# Take stern action against terrorists involved

From Shehab Ahmed

JESSORE, March 10: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today asked the administration and the police to take stern action against "terrorists" irrespective of their political affiliation and to remain alert against recurrence of Sunday's incident.

"We must take lesson from such heinous criminal act," she told a law-and-order review meeting at the Collectorate building, attended by local political leaders and top officials in the administration and the police.

"It is the responsibility of the administration and the police to ensure peace and security for the people. Lapses in this regard will not be tolerated," she said. She also advised police to keep vigil on public places.

Without naming anyone she said, "They have become united."

They would like to pick up issues like this (bombings) to embarrass the government, to show that there is no law and order and the government has lost control."

Expressing annoyance against the district administration and police, she said that she had warned against such incidents. "The killing of Kazi Aref Ahmed and other incidents exposed their ulterior motives," she said.

Those who have lost their

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Asma and her mother are all smiles at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University hospital.

— Star photo

## A new lease of life for Asma

By Naimul Haq

Eighteen-year-old Asma, who was once counting her days at a city hospital, is now looking forward to start a new life. "I never imagined this day would ever come in my life," the all smiles young girl told this correspondent at the Bangabandhu Medical University Hospital (BMUH) yesterday, noting that she might be released today.

"Isn't it wonderful? I will be back home and return to normal life again," she said in excitement, her face no longer looking pale as before.

"I am sick and tired of hospital life. At one stage, I feared that I might not survive. But now all those apprehensions are gone. I am looking forward with hope. The long ordeal is over. I am cured. I am comforted by the thought that I shall be

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## Noisy scene over Jessore incident

# BNP stages stormy walkout from JS

By Staff Correspondent

BNP lawmakers staged a stormy walkout from the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday as the Chair did not allow them to speak on the Jessore killings at the very moment they demanded the discussion.

Following a brief exchange with Chief Whip of the Opposition Khandakar Delwar Hossain, Deputy Speaker Abdul Hamid agreed to listen to the BNP MPs after the legislative business was over. But this failed to satisfy them and they walked out in protest.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition AQM Badruddoza Choudhury and some other top BNP legislators pointed their fingers at the Chair and shouted while leaving the House.

Besides, some back-benchers in the party hit their desks with files amid shouting just before the walkout. One of them tore

papers and threw those in the air.

Earlier, Khandakar Delwar Hossain rose on a Point of Order to request the Deputy Speaker to allow five of the BNP lawmakers, who had submitted notices seeking adjournment of the sitting to discuss Sunday's killings at Jessore, to speak on their motions.

"How can the Sangsad function unless you allow us to speak on issues like the one in Jessore... You are gagging our voice in the House," an agitated Delwar told the Deputy Speaker.

The opposition chief whip's statement prompted the BNP members to shout at the Chair. The ruling party members made a noisy protest.

Abdul Hamid's assurance to listen to the five BNP MPs after

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## AB Bank Case

# Hearing of appeal to transfer case Monday

By M Shamsur Rahman

The High Court judge of court number six yesterday ordered hearing of an application filed by Barrister Rafique-Ul-Huq to transfer the case regarding removal of four Beximco directors from the board of AB Bank and IFIC Bank to begin on Monday.

Huq yesterday submitted the same application for transfer of the case from court number six which he had submitted once earlier and then withdrawn on Monday last. In his application Rafique-Ul-Huq expressed clients' apprehension about hearing in the said court as a result of various developments including newspaper reporting about it.

Placing the same application yesterday Rafique-Ul-Huq stated that he wanted to resubmit the earlier withdrawn application, for transfer of the case since the court without hearing the case on the previous

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## Cross-examination of Shazneen's father continues

By Staff Correspondent

Latifur Rahman, father of murdered teenager Shazneen, was cross-examined by Mohammad Ali, lawyer of supervisor Badal, an accused in the Shazneen murder case, for the ninth day yesterday in the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court for about one and a half hours from 3 pm.

All the six accused were produced before the court yesterday. A murder case and another case under the Woman and

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# Dry spell, water and power crises make life miserable

By Staff Correspondent

Unbearable heat coupled with irregular water and power supply in the city in the last few days have made life of residents miserable.

As the mercury shot to 37.2 degree Celsius in Dhaka yesterday, residents in many areas were complaining about lack of water and low voltage power supply throughout the day. Power disruption in many areas aggravated their sufferings. Mirpur, Pallabi, Shenpara, Shaymoli, Mohammadpur, Sheorapara, Lalmatia, Rayerbazar, Lalbag, Shantibag, Mugdapara, Shahidbag, Rampura, Gandaria, and many other areas are not getting regular water and electric supply.

A resident of Gandaria said, the local people collect water in buckets from roadside water taps after midnight when water starts flowing for some time. A resident of Mugdapara made a similar complaint.

In Mirpur, the situation is worse. A resident complained

that water supply in Section 2 remained suspended for the last two days.

WASA sources said that water supply remained suspended as pumps could not be operated due to low voltage power supply.

Residents of Dhanmondi, Green Road, Kalabagan, Sobhanbag and adjacent areas complained that the power supply was near-normal but very often disrupted for few seconds to few minutes. This damaged many household electronic and electrical goods including water pump, they said.

Poor water supply is usual during March and April as sub-soil water level falls due to natural reasons. But the authorities had earlier promised better power supply at this time this year.

With the inauguration of the sixth unit at Ghorashal power plant in early February, the authorities had claimed that there would be no load shedding this lean season. With its inaugura-

tion, the total power generation capacity of all the power plants in the country had stood at around 2500 MW against a projected maximum demand of 2350 MW to 2450 MW.

But within a few days, it became inoperative due to technical problems. In addition, the third unit in the plant was also shut down due to technical problems. These two plants have a generation capacity of 440 MW. The Rauzan power plant was also having chronic troubles.

During most of February, the level of load shedding remained at around 400 MW at peak hours.

These plants were made operative a couple of days ago and the load shedding situation somewhat improved. But as some small power plants were kept shut down for technical reasons, the load shedding level remained at 200 MW during the last few days.

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## Medical board to review condition of Parvez today

By Staff Correspondent

A five-member medical board will meet today to review the condition of 13-year-old Parvez who is fighting death at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital since February 25.

Parvez was hit in the head with a brick on the last day of the 66-hour opposition-called hartal. He was admitted to the hospital's neurosurgery department (Ward-30) and was operated upon for brain haemorrhage on the following day.

"The board has decided to meet because his condition deteriorated further. An 'extreme

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## India wants to buy gas, use Ctg port: Hegde

India wants to use Chittagong port and buy natural gas from Bangladesh, said the Indian Commerce Minister Ramkrishna Hegde yesterday, reports UNB.

He told reporters on conclusion of his three-day visit here yesterday morning that the matters were discussed at prime minister's level and the ministerial level as well. "But Bangladesh is yet to respond positively."

Hegde said Chittagong Port is neither well developed nor

modernised enough to handle additional pressure of cargo.

Regarding natural gas, the Indian Commerce Minister said Bangladesh would think of their proposal only after assessing the reserves and meeting the domestic requirement. The assessment is yet to be completed to ascertain if Bangladesh had enough gas to export.

However, he said, India has pressing need for importing substantial gas.

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# Dacoits loot Subarna Express : 30 injured

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 10: At least 30 persons were injured when a gang of dacoits, equipped with lethal weapons, swooped on the passengers of Chittagong bound non-stop 'Subarna' Express train at Mastanagar under Mirersharai thana last night, police and witnesses said.

The dacoits, who were traveling in the guise of passengers, boarded the train from Kamalapur Railway Station in Dhaka at 5 pm, police and railway sources said.

When the train reached Mastanagar at around 9-20 pm, the dacoits attacked the passengers of five compartments, and started looting their belongings, including cash money and ornaments.

As the passengers raised hue and cry and some of them tried to resist, the dacoits attacked them with knives and other lethal weapons, leaving at least 30 injured, witnesses said.

They also assaulted some female passengers at the time of snatching ornaments, witnesses added.

After committing dacoity, the armed bandits cut off gas connection to stop the train. As the train stopped near Mastanagar, they got down from it and fled away.

On receiving information, Mirersharai thana police rushed to the spot and arrested six suspects from there.

Railway authorities started investigation into the incident.

## Lankan cricketers arrive

Sports Reporter

The Sri Lankan cricket team arrived in the city yesterday morning to take part in the Asian Test Championship final against Pakistan. The match is billed for a March 12 start at the Bagabandhu National Stadium.

Twelve of the 14-man team came direct from Karachi while Aravinda de Silva, who will lead the side in the absence of their injured skipper Arjuna Ranatunga, and left-arm pace bowler Chaminda Vaas arrived

from Colombo via Bangkok three hours later.

On their arrival at ZIA, the team was taken to their hotel, where they rested for the whole day. The islanders, who have qualified for the three-nation tournament final with two draws and 11 bonus points ahead of India's 10, will have their nets at the Bangabandhu National Stadium this morning.

Meanwhile, Pakistan, the

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## SEMI

**CHIEF GUEST : MR RICHARD KEMP, MANAGING DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL TIMES MANAGEMENT, ASIA, WILL ATTEND THE SEMINAR ORGANISED AT PML CAMPUS AND RESPOND TO QUERIES FROM THE PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS AND THEIR PARENTS. FREE ACCESS.**

**TIME: 5:30 PM-7:00PM, DATE: Thursday, The 11th March '99, VENUE: PML Campus**

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