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## Govt closing down mills, factories: Khaleda

KALIAKOIR (Gazipur), May 2: Opposition leader Begum Khaleda Zia who will lead a mass procession in the capital tomorrow (Monday) urged the people to express their no-con-fidence in the government by joining the street agitation, reports UNB.

"Join the mass procession and demonstrate that you are no longer with this corrupt gov-ernment," she told a May Day workers' rally at Chandra

Maidan on Saturday. Khaleda renewed her plea for meeting the five-point demand that included resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner.

"We are in movement and we'll be compelled to go for onepoint oust-government movement soon if our demands are not met".

Organised by local Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal, the rally was also addressed by Tanvir Ahmed Siddiqui, Abdullah Al Noman, A S M Hannan Shah, Selima Rahman, Prof M A Mannan, Nazrul Islam Khan, Amanullah Aman, Khandaker Abdus Salam and Hasan Sarker with Maksudur Rahman Helali in the chair.

Maj Gen (retd) Z A Khan, Li Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman and former DIG Ziauddin Ahmed Murad were present at

the meeting. The BNP chairperson blamed the government for closing down mills and factories rendering thousands of workers paupers as part of its "India-appeasement policy".

"New industries are growing up in India cashing in on the shutdown of our mills and factories," the former prime minister said.

She said Awami League government could not mention any development work done by it in the country. "It has presented candle and lantern in the evening instead of electric

The BNP chief claimed that

### Defamation suit Next date of hearing May 31

Abed Khan, Impress Telefilm and Swpan Roy yesterday appeared through their counsel in the Sub-Judge's Court in a defamation suit filed by Jamaat leaders and prayed for filing written statement, reports UNB.

The court set May 31 for submitting written statement. Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Prof Golam Azam, Secretary General Maulana Matiur Rahman Nizami and 8 others filed the Tk 17 crore defamation suit against Secretary, Ministry of Information, Chairman of National Broadcasting Corporation. Director General of BTV and 16 others 'for telecasting a package programme on March

31, that tarnished their image'. None appeared on behalf of BTV although the court had duly served summon on it. It was said the summon was not duly served on other accused.

From Page 1

that a solution should be found

out keeping in mind that the

companies' employees are not

lawyer to read a certain para-

graph of his written submission

where it was stated that the di-

rectors failed to pay one in-

stalment and pleaded for one

month's time but the bank did

the bank's silence led the peti-

tioners to think that the time

was allowed. The directors

could easily repay the money

within that time but they did

Alam then concluded saying

that the directors were trying to

reach a solution with the bank

to resolve the matter and that

there was possibility of a out-

argued that it was not men-

tioned in the original

rescheduling terms that in case

of failure in payment of one in-

stalment, the entire amount

at a later stage during corre-

spondence between the bank

and is being imposed on the pe-

pointed out that the lawyer was

now saying that the entire

loans were asked for and that it

Bangladesh Bank that you were

willing to pay the instalment

and that you were not liable for

the entire amount?. Why did

you run to the Supreme Court ...

Contesting the defence ar-

guments, Huda then argued that

. Justice Ebadul Huq said.

the borrowing directors.

He said that the matter came

it was incorporated later

At this stage the judge

"Why did you not inform the

Barrister Nazmul Huda then

The judge pointed out that

The judge then asked the

affected.

not respond.

not, the judge said.

of-court settlement

would fall due.

titioners," he said.

was illegal.

some 3 lakh people were employed during her regime in 13,000 garment industries raising the number from 700 units.

Criticising the government for reneging its election pledges to workers and farmers, the Leader of the Opposition urged all sections of people — workers and farmers — to join the ongoing movement for protecting their rights.

"Farmers, workers, teachers, students and people in general will not survive if the government stays in power anymore."

The former prime minister pledged that farmers would get fair price of their farm products and new mills and factories would be set up if BNP returned to power.

### Implement Wages Commission Award: SNS

By Staff Correspondent The Sammilita Nari Samaj (SNS) yesterday demanded implementation of Wages Commission Award for factory workers and protested widespread sexual repression on female workers.

A press release last night said the SNS leaders at a rally at the TSC road island also protested axing of workers and demanded an end to disparity in wages for male and female workers. The rally was organised on the occasion of the May

They alleged that workers had to work at many garment factories in Mirpur, Farmgate, Mahakhali, Banani and Gulshan in the city on the May Day though it was a government holiday.

The SNS leaders asked for a clarification from the BGMEA as to why many garment factories were open and the workers were not allowed to enjoy the holiday.

They said although a new home minister has taken over, women are still facing violence and sexual repression at work place, the press release said They demanded exemplary punishment for repression on

Earlier, SNS brought out a procession from Shahbagh.

# 2 raped

From Page 1

In the other incident, two youths, identified as Kamal and Nurul, got inside the shanty of the 12-year-old girl and dragged her into a nearby abandoned house at about 11 am Sunday, according to hospital sources.

There they violated her and then left her unconscious beside a road at around 3:30 in the morning. Local people admitted her to Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital in a critical condition, the sources added.

A case was lodged with Rupganj thana, but no one could be arrested till filing of the report late last night.

Classification of loans

# Rickshaws rule the road

Thousands of licensed and unlicensed rickshaws choke the city streets, virtually blocking traffic, evident in the picture taken from Gulistan area yesterday. See editorial on page 4. - Star photo

There is a need for a 'final

"The last battle for global

push' to eliminate deadly virus

poliomyelitis from the earth.

the World Heath Organisation

eradication of polio has com-

menced. Globally, we have al-

ready wiped out the disease by

90 per cent and we are in

Bangladesh capital today to

discuss ways and means to

eliminate the last 10 per cent of

the disease remaining mainly

in the Indian Subcontinent."

said Dr Uton Muchtar. WHO re-

gional director for South East

conference yesterday on the eve

of the sixth meeting of the WHO

South-East Asia Region EPI

Technical Consultative Group

on Vaccine Preventable Dis-

eases at Pan Pacific Sonargaon

Dr Bruce Aylward, chief of

WHO's global programme for

vaccines and immunisation

while briefing newsmen, said:

We have come a long way, and

finally that final line is in

sight. We know that door-to-

door immunisation campaigns

will reach the children previ-

ously missed. If we don't make

that extra effort to stay on tar-

get, we risk losing the ground so

painstakingly won, and the

Polio is caused by an infec-

tion with any one of three

viruses - types 1, 2 and 3. Al-

though it can strike at any age.

children under age five are most

"Certain quarters in the admin-

istration had influenced police

to arrest the students only to

provoke them to create a

volatile situation on the cam-

pus. The charge of making

petrol bombs was also false be-

cause the arrested students were

released within an hour", a stu-

dent who was present on the

campus during the incidents

tated and launched a fresh at-

tack on teachers' quarters when

they heard that one student,

Rabin, was caught and severely

beaten up by some teachers fol-

lowing an earlier attack on

teachers' residences," a leader

of the Engineering University

"Students later became vio-

Central Students Union

lent when they heard a gunshot

during the attack, which cre-

ated panic and made the teach-

ers' families cry out of fear," the

this correspondent denied that

Rabin or any other student was

beaten by any of the teachers.

Some teachers talking to

"Students became more agi-

goal would slip away.

vulnerable.

claimed.

(EUCSU) said.

student leader said.

He was speaking at a press

(WHO) said.

### BRAC office in Sylhet looted

From Staff Correspondent SYLHET, May 2: Cash and valuables worth about Tk 2.48 lakh were looted from the BRAC office at Telirbazar of Sylhet sadar thana early hours today.

Police said, about 10 to 12 miscreants swooped on the staff at about 3:30 am today and took away Tk 1.5 lakh in cash and goods worth about one lakh taka from there at gun point. Manager of the branch lodged a case with Kotwali po-

### 100 shops gutted in Chittagong From Our Correspondent

lice. None was arrested.

CHITTAGONG, Apr 2: At least 100 shops were gutted in a devastating fire at Reazuddin Bazar in the city in the early hours of yesterday.

The fire originated from a short circuit and soon engulfed the entire market.

The shop owners estimated the loss at about Tk one crore. A panicky situation was created in the area as terrified employees of the shops ran helterskelter. Huge goods were looted during the blaze.

## PM: Pay hike

From Page 1

Commission. The Prime Minister announced that the pay enhanced would be made effective from July 1, 1997.

Sheikh Hasina also brought a public accusation against the opposition of trying to unseat her government by patronising

killings and conspiracy. "They want to hatch up artificial crisis through killing and conspiracy .... They want to create chaos in the name of movement and oust the government,'

Hasina urged the people to stand to all machinations and secure democracy and a stable economy for the welfare of the working people. Workers belonging to differ-

she told the rally.

ent trade unions, some wearing red uniform and holding miniature red flags, attended the rally shouting various sloso, the directors would not have gans for the government. asked for the same facilities

### Petrobangla

From Page 1 consultant

Earlier in December, the Cabinet Committee gave green signal to Unocal's 750 million US dollar WRIP, despite Petrobangla's opinion that the project might have a "negative impact" on the country's economy. The Committee asked the Energy Ministry to finalise a Production Sharing Contract (PSC) for Shahbazpur Gasfield. a Gas Purchase Sales Agreement (GPSA), Power Purchase Agreement (PPA), a

But, under instruction from

higher authorities, Petrobangla

recently sent its officials to

Khulna to determine the route

of the proposed pipeline, the

Ironically, the government

asked BAPEX, the exploration

unit of Petrobangla, to provide

necessary expertise for the

Shahbazpur Gasfield in 1995

and submitted a proposal for its

development. But the govern-

ment brushed aside BAPEX's

proposal and inducted Unocal

estimated to have more than

400 billion cubic feet (bcf) of re-

coverable gas, the sources said.

will allow replacement of im-

ported liquid fuel with domestic

natural gas and thus

Bangladesh would save approx-

imately 70 million US dollars

per year in foreign exchange.

The Shahbazpur Gasfield is

Unocal says that its project

BAPEX had discovered the

pipeline contract and a pipeline tariff contract within three months. bank, Tania Amir said that the The process was slowed down following the observations by the US Department of

Energy.

sources said

in late 1996.

WRIP.

rescheduling in line with Islam Group, which their lawyers are denying. "They obtained an injunction from the court of Fifth Sub

Judge after they were granted the new rescheduling arrangement. They declined to accept the arrangements, calling the conditions too stringent," she pointed out.

a certain amount which the banks kept for financing industries and none but the directors get the money. The directors manipulate the money depriv-

the writ petition was maintain-"But how?" the judge asked.

after filing the writ petition". "That is true," he replied. Huda then said, all that the petitioners want is reschedul-

"You went to Bangladesh Bank

ing of the loans in line with Islam Group. The defence lawyers had already said that it was approved

but was turned down by one of the directors, the judge then Denying, Huda said that it was not true because had it been

He also countered defence arguments that Section 17 of the Bank Companies Act dealt with only loss of directorship

and had nothing to do with recovery of loans. Section 17 says, if a director fails to repay loans within two months after issuance of notice.

he will lose directorship. "So it deals with recovery of loans." "And the stay order of the court has stayed the entire process," Huda said. He also said that the direc-

tors were running 20 companies and that the banks were also benefited by providing loans to these companies. Appearing for the central

petitioners were granted

She also said that there was ing genuine loan seekers, she

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# Battle to eradicate last 10pc of polio starts: WHO

By Staff Correspondent

The virus is spread through contaminated faeces or oral secretion or by eating food or drink that have been contaminated. The virus enters the body through mouth and after dormancy period between 4 and 35 years, it enters the bloodstream and attacks the nervous system.

Dr W Hardjotanojo, WHO country representative for Bangladesh, said, "At this stage, it is vital that every single children is reached with polio vaccine so that all children are covered. If we have to achieve the year 2000 goal of global polio eradication, then we must reach the last 10 per cent now left out.

To meet the challenge, WHO has taken up a plan to accelerate the implementation of house-to-house campaigns in the remaining polio endemic (transmittable zone) countries including Bangladesh and

The strategies are improving routine polio vaccination coverage and helping conduct national immunisation days, implement high quality surveillance of paralysed children and gear up house-to-house mopping up campaign "This will have an enormous

impact on reducing transmission of wild poliovirus in one of the last reservoirs in the region," explained Dr Jon Andrus. a polio expert from WHO's regional office.

Bangladesh has a remarkable achievement of about 98 per cent polio vaccination cov-

They alleged that police failed

to respond to their call when

they were attacked by some un-

ruly students. "Police were mere

witnesses during the four-hour

vandalism and attack that

caused a loss of at least Tk 25

demand of the All Party Stu-

dents Unity at BUET, made on

April 27, a top EUCSU leader

failed to justify those. The de-

mands include removal of the

teacher who caught the student

who was impersonating his

classmate in the class test, re-

moval of the Director of Stu-

dents Welfare and an amicable

solution regarding the expul-

students were brought to the

BUET on the night of April 26

for making bombs and they

also took part in the attack on

teachers' quarters," one student

of DMP Hasan Mahmud Khon-

daker claimed that police were

quick to act and rushed to the

When contacted, DC (South)

"Several Dhaka University

sion of the student.

spot promptly.

Asked about the four-point

lakh," a BUET teacher said.

Call to reopen BUET

erage through its extended programme of immunisation (EPI). UNB adds: State Minister for Health M Amanullah said, six confirm polio cases out of 39 suspects were diagnosed after completion of the first round of the fifth National Immunization Day in 1998.

Disclosing the figures he said all should work hard to eradicate poliomyelitis (polio) from Bangladesh as NID coverage appeared to be decreasing last year and polioviruses still being detected in four divisions. "Polio eradication programme in Bangladesh has

been one of the most successful health programmes and the day is not too far when we would be able to announce complete elimination of polio cases in the country," said Dr Shamsul Huq, director. Primary Health-

Among others who spoke on the occasion are, health minister Salahuddin Yusuf, Unicef country representative. Ms Azfar and director general of health services Prof A K M Nurul Anwar. Representatives from Rotary

International, Unicef, USAID. Japanese government, JICA, DFID, DANIDA and CDC were present at the press conference as partners of the WHO that have large contributions to the polio eradication mission. All the partners provide technical and financial assistance to WHO for the mission.

By Staff Correspondent

A man was arrested on Saturday allegedly for torturing his wife at his Lalmatia residence in the city after she refused to get herself into sex trade, police and hospital sources said Critically injured Samanja

Halim Mahmud, the husband, was arrested when father of the victim lodged a case with Mohammadpur thana Friday. According to police, Firoz Ahmed, father of the housewife, rescued a severely injured Trishna from the Lalmatia resi-

during the torture, they added. In the FIR, Firoz quoting her

sex worker.

### Bid to force wife into prostitution: Husband held

Trishna, 21, the victim, was undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, the sources said.

dence of Halim Wednesday night. Sharp weapons and burning cigarettes were used

daughter alleged that Halim took Trishna at a residential hotel and asked her to serve as a

# Three big projects to strengthen road communications network

The government is going to implement three gigantic projects costing over Tk 3268 crore to build a strong road communications network linking all parts of the country, reports

A high-level meeting at the PM's office yesterday with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair made a preview of the physical works of the schemes to be started shortly. The three projects, being im-

plemented by the Roads and Highways Department, are Tk 2247.62 crore Third Road Rehabilitation and Maintenance Project (RRMP), Tk 453 crore Bhairab Bridge project and Tk 567 crore Paksey Bridge project. Communications Secretary Syed Rezaul Hayat Khan ap-

prised the meeting that under

the Third RRMP eight compo-

nents for rehabilitation and construction of roads and bridges would be implemented. The components are over Tk 888.85 crore 34.5 km Dhaka-Sylhet highway rehabilitation works, construction of Nalka-Hatikamrul-Banpara road involving over Tk 396.48 crore.

construction of over Tk 470.39

crore feeder road and Tk 266.38

crore international and re-

gional highway-maintenance

scheme. Besides Third RRMP, Tk 86.68 crore would be spent for road safety programme and procurement of construction tools. Tk 41.09 crore for implementing follow-up projects, Tk 56.31 crore for widening the narrow bridges and Tk 41.42 crore for institutional devel-

opment. Rezaul Hayat further in-

formed the meeting that the four-lane Bhairab Bridge financed by a British grant is likely to be completed by year 2001. Construction work begins in August.

The 1.80 km four-lane Paksey Bridge with 17 spans will be built with joint financing by Japan OECF and Bangladesh government. Physical work on the bridge will begin in October this year.

While reviewing the projects, the Prime Minister directed the authorities concerned to take into serious consideration topographical and ecological conditions of the respective ar-

She also directed the Communications Ministry to take up a project for constructing a bridge over river Teesta.

# Mass Processions

From Page 1'
planned to go for a half-day
hartal on May 3 but later
shifted it as they shifted the

mass procession programme from April 29 to May 3.

However, a half-day hartal is scheduled for tomorrow in districts under Khulna Division to protest filing of "conspira-tional" case against BNP leader Tariqul Islam and frequent in-cidents of murder and terrorism in the southern region.

Liaison committee meeting sources said the BNP favoured a half-day hartal on May 11 only in the capital city, but the Jatiya Party disagreed. The JP argued in favour of a half-day hartal throughout the country on Sunday or Thursday 'as per tradition. After failing to reach a con-sensus on the date, the liaison committee meeting decided that

the issue be discussed with policymakers in the respective parties. As per the decision, the issue was discussed at the level of policy makers last night. "We could not finalise the date of our planned hartal today. We will sit again tomorrow morning to finalise the date. Top leaders of the opposition parties will announce the har-

(Monday)," IOJ leader ARM Abdul Matin told The Daily Star. The sources said there will a series of demonstration programmes this month.

programme tomorrow

BNP leaders M Shamsul Islam and Anwar Zahid, JP Presidium member Kazi Feroz Rashid, Jamaat leaders Mohammad Kamaruzzaman, Abdul Kader Mollah and ATM Azharul Islam, IOJ leaders Mufti Fazlul Haq Amini and ARM Abdul Matin attended the meeting.

The opposition will bring

### All exams held despite JCD strike: DU By DU Correspondent

All the scheduled examinations and classes in some departments were held at the Dhaka University yesterday despite a day-long strike called by the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the student wing of main opposition BNP, according to a DU press release.

The JCD enforced the strike on the campus to protest 'attack' on its procession towards the Prime Minister's office on April 25 and press home its 12-point

The strike was part of its three-day scheduled programme to observe strike in the educational institutions across the country.

However, the administrative work was normal and the scheduled meeting of academic council and election committee were also held during the strike.

The university buses, which carry the non-resident students into the campus from different parts of the city, could not ply as the JCD activists locked up its main gate early in the morning. Only a few microbuses went out of the campus to pick up the officials.

The JCD brought out a procession on the campus in the morning and held a rally at the main gate of Arts Building at

At the rally, the JCD leaders said that the students throughout the country observed the strike spontaneously.

They also threatened to launch a tougher agitation if their demands were not met immediately.

The demand include with-

drawal of 'false cases' filed against the JCD leaders and activists, reduction of bus fare by 50 per cent for the students, removal of terrorists from the residential halls of the Dhaka University, reduction of prices of educational materials and arrest of those involved in the rape incident at the Jahangirnagar University.

Presided over by Manir Hossain, the rally was addressed, among others, by Monjur Elahi Monwar Hossain Rana, ABM Mosharaf Hossain, Rafiq Sikder, Muzaffar Hossain Zakir, Helen Zerin Khan, Mostafizul Islam Mamun, Abdul Bari Dani and Farhad Hossain Azad.

Later, the JCD staged a sit-in in front of the Vice Chancellor's office for half an hour in the afternoon to press home their demand.

Besides, pro-government Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) brought out separate procession and held a rally at the Bat-tala on the campus protesting the strike.

Presided over by Bahadur Bepary, the rally was addressed, among others, by Liakat Ali Sikder, Rafiqul Islam, Sajjad Hossain and Sujit Roy Nondi.

### Tornado From Page 1

fices were also damaged by the tornado.

The seriously wounded victims are Momin, 16, Badhshah. 60, Nurullah, 46, Motiur, 68, Momena, 67, Badiul, 17, Bulbul, 4, and Uzjal, 3. They were admitted to nearby health centres and hospitals.

The tornado-hit villages are Shingmari, Andarbala, Brahmatar, Charbalabari, Dhulaubari, Kochakata, Kamartari, Balabari, Keranipara, Kaliganj Bazar, Mominpara, Jobanandakuthi, Nawapara, Jakaripara, Tariapara, Mollapara and a cluster village called Pashchim Poiradanga.

out mass processions in the capital, all cities and district and thana headquarters today. BNP will bring out procession from the city's Paltan Maidan at 3 pm. Its Chairper-son Begum Khaleda Zia will

lead the procession, to be terminated at Rampura Bazar. Jamaat-e-Islami will bring out its procession at 4 pm from Paltan Maidan and terminate at Bangla Motor crossing.

Similar programme will be followed by other parties in the alliance including Islami Oikya Jote, JAGPA and Democratic League.

The JP postponed its mass procession programme only in the capital due to "unavoidable circumstances". However, its programmes in other parts of the country will remain unchanged, said a press release.

### Lawyers threaten boycott of Ctg CMM's court

From Our Correspondent CHITTAGONG, May 2: Lawyers of the district have threatened to go for an indefinite boycott of CMM's court from May 10 if the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate was not withdrawn by May 9.

District Bar Association announced the programme at a press conference at the local press club here this afternoon. As part of their programme, the lawyers will stage a threehour sit-in on CMM's court premises from 12 noon tomor-

The leaders of Chittagong

### Ctg: BCL confce

From Page 1

some ammunition from the spot. No casualty was reported. Security was tightened at Fatikchhari as a tense situation was prevailing there. Police sources said that the

incident was a sequel to intra-

party rivalry of BCL. Fatikch-

### hari unit. Meherpur-1

From Page 1 day afternoon 'for deferment' of the by-elections. But after a "formal hearing", the EC re-

jected the appeal Meherpur - 1 seat of parliament fell vacant following BNP legislator Ahmed Ali's death on February 13. According to the Constitution, by-election in the

seat has to be held by May 14. But the EC does not see any 'practical scope' for deferment of the by-election.

Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena told The Daily Star last night the appeal by JP (Monju was rejected on several grounds. "The Appellate Division has not barred holding of the by-election on the stipulated date. Secondly, we have already made all necessary preparations, including deployment of the members of Army, Bangladesh Rifles and police, to hold the polls," the CEC said. "Besides, there is no practical scope to defer the elections when the Higher Secondary Certificate examinations that begin across the country on May 6 will continue

till June." Meanwhile, EC sources said that Mustasim Billah was not the 'original candidate' of JP (Monju). "Billah had filed nomination as an independent candidate. The party picked him up when nomination of its original candidate was cancelled on ground of bank loan default," said a top level EC official.

### Vajpayee

From Page 1 terview published in its latest edition that he disfavoured making the "foreign origin" of Sonia Gandhi, an issue in the coming elections saying this would not be "healthy"

Outlining the nature of anti-Sonia campaign the BJP would launch in the coming electioneering, Sharma said the controversial deal for purchase of Swedish guns Bofors, which was finalised during the reign of Rajiv Gandhi, and the alleged kickbacks in the deal would naturally come up once Sonia Gandhi decides to jump into electoral fray.

He said the BJP would focus on the "ties" between the Gandhi family and Italian businessman Ottavio Quattrocchi, an accused in the Bofors case.

Sharma said it was going to be Vajpayee versus Sonia Gandhi for the country's prime ministerial post and the Congress president, "is the issue in this election." Suggestions have already

been by some allies of the BJP

that amendments to the Indian

constitution be considered to bar a person of 'foreign origin' from occupying the post of president, vice president and prime minister of India. Reuters adds: Dates for the new election in which more than 600 million people are eli-

gible to vote are likely to be set Vajpayee remained the voters' top choice to lead the country, a new opinion poll said today. A Times of India poll showed that 48 per cent of people in major Indian cities felt Vajpayee was the most suitable

candidate for the prime minis-

ter's job. Only 24 per cent gave their support to Sonia Gandhi, the Italian-born head of Congress.