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Opposition MPs march thru' city streets today

By Staff Correspondent

Opposition lawmakers will march through city streets today to protest government acts of 'harassment' on them, including arrests of some and filing of cases on 'false charges' against others.

MPs belonging to BNP, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami have planned their marches from separate spots at different times. They all will however end their marches at the Jatiya Press Club.

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia will lead the BNP procession from in front of the party's central office at Naya Paltan at 11am. It will pass through Fakir-e-pool, Dainik Bangla intersection, Baitul Mukarram north gate, Purana Paltan crossing and Tophkhana Road before ending at Press Club, said a party press release last night. Party workers are expected to gather on both sides of the roads the MPs are due to pass through.

The BNP lawmakers have been requested to be present at the party central office by 10.30am.

Khaleda Zia is likely to speak before or after her party's march to announce a fresh course of agitation, said a

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BAPEX MD, 8 Titas Gas officials suspended

Star Report

Eight high officials of Titas Gas and the Managing Director of BAPEX were suspended yesterday on charges of corruption involving Tk 20 crores.

Delwar Bakht, a Titas General Manager, was however relieved of charges by the authorities yesterday.

A three-member probe committee headed by Joint Secretary of the Energy Ministry earlier found former Managing Director of Titas who is now the MD of BAPEX and nine high officials of Titas involved in providing costly gas connections through illegal means.

The nine officials were BAPEX MD Maj (ret'd) Mukhtadir Ali, Titas General Managers — Delwar Bakht, MM Talukder, MA Mannan and AKM Rais Siddiqui, and Deputy General Managers — Khalid Hasan, Mohammad Asabuddin, Kawser Azizur Rahman, Manzurul Haq and Shafiq Azam.

Following the probe report, State Minister for Energy Prof Rafiqul Islam instructed Petrobangla and Titas authorities to suspend the accused officials. However, sources said that he was repeatedly advised by the ministry officials about possible repercussions of this decision.

Sources said that the officers and engineers of Titas Gas protested the move and gheraoed the office of Titas Gas MD. But they were dispersed with the help of 'union activists' of Titas Gas.

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Prayer Timings

May 24		
Azan	Jamaat	
Fajr 4-15	4-20	
Zohr 12-45	1-30	
Asr 4-45	4-55	
Maghrib 6-40	6-43	
Esha 7-40	8-10	

Source: Islamic Foundation

Power sector crisis

'Management inefficiency largely responsible'

By Staff Correspondent

Energy and Mineral Resources Secretary Dr Towfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury yesterday said inefficient management in the power sector was largely responsible for the present power crisis.

He told a seminar in the city that the present power crisis could be drastically improved by increasing managerial efficiency and load management.

Dr Towfiq presented three separate charts of daily power consumption of three consecutive years and said power demand in peak hours could be reduced by a great degree by controlling power demand load. Peak demand could be spread throughout the day so that the demand curve could be made as flat as possible, he added.

He was presenting a key-note paper on 'Bangladesh's Power Situation: Problems and Responses' organised by the Cen-

tre for Policy Dialogue at its office yesterday. Government officials and public representatives were present at the dialogue moderated by CPD Chairman Rehman Sobhan.

Dr Towfiq noted that other present problems of the power sector included power relay coordination, inability of the PDB to shut down various power plants needing rehabilitation as there was a constant demand pressure, lack of reserve power or excess power capacity to ensure stable supply and a lack of balance growth of power sub-sectors.

'Above all, fund crisis remains the biggest constraint in this sector for nearly a decade now,' he said.

The discussion was participated by former energy minister and minister for Science and Technology Noor Uddin Khan, Principal Secretary to

the Prime Minister Dr SA Samad, former energy secretary Azimuddin Ahmed, former deputy prime minister Jamal Uddin Ahmed, former division chief of Planning Commission Syed Maqbul Hossain, former member of Planning Commission Dr Nazrul Islam, former Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission Prof Nurul Islam, former planning minister AM Zahiruddin Khan, former PDB chairman Nuruddin Kamal, PDB Chairman Qamrul Islam Siddique, REB Chairman Brig MA Malek and others. However, Secretary for Power was not present at the seminar.

In his paper, Dr Towfiq showed that most power plants took about eight years to be built. There were instances where a mere rehabilitation of a power plant took nine years to accomplish, he said.

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20000 die during child birth every year in Bangladesh

By Staff Correspondent

About 20,000 women die every year in Bangladesh due to delivery-related complications, which is one of the highest in the world.

The main reasons behind the deaths are excessive bleeding, obstructed labour, sepsis, abortion and eclampsia.

This was revealed in a recent Unicef study. The study said there are about 600,000 complicated delivery cases a year, 90 per cent of which are conducted at home by 'untrained birth attendants'. It also said that services for the management of complications were inadequate and underutilised in the country.

About four million women give birth every year, 60 per cent of whom are anemic and malnourished.

The study also said about 30 to 50 per cent of the new-born babies have low birth weight—less than 2.5 kilogram. Of every 1000 babies born alive, 12 die within hours of birth, with

eight of them due to injury during deliveries.

Almost seventy-five per cent of the mothers die due to delivery-related complications and do not live to see the first birthday of their babies.

To avert these unnecessary deaths, the government has undertaken a Unicef-funded special programme called 'Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric Care'.

The programme aims at reducing annual maternal deaths by 50 per cent, increasing the number of normal deliveries attended by trained traditional birth attendants and increasing uptake of pre- and post-natal care services.

The programme will be implemented in 40 thanas across the country to strengthen the capacity of thana health centres for safe delivery practices.

It would focus on safe delivery, basic maternity services, addressing the needs of women, communication for be-

havioural change and development, involvement of professional bodies and participation of stakeholders.

'It is not just a health issue but social development issue as well,' Yasmin Ali, a Unicef consultant, told The Daily Star.

'Three delays can kill mothers—delay in taking decision to seek medical care, delay in reaching medical facility and delay in receiving quality care at the facility.'

'What we aim to do is address all these problems for the pregnant women...' she said.

The programme also aims to seek medical care and medical intervention and motivation to utilise facilities.

One of the main focuses of the programme is to provide access to EOC. 'Without EOC mortality rate cannot be reduced,' said Professor Khalilur Rahman of DMCH who is also a supervisor of the training pro-

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Hundreds join human chain Vow to save the Udyan

By Special Correspondent

A human chain was formed by a large number of people at Osmany Udyan yesterday in a symbolic protest to save the wooded park, the only open space between the new and old Dhaka.

The park has been chosen as the site for the planned Bangladesh Convention Centre for the Non-aligned Movement (NAM) summit in 2001.

The human chain was organised by 'Save the 11,000 trees at Osmany Udyan Move-

ment', a campaign led by Dhaka University Professor Sirajul Islam Chowdhury. Academics, poets, writers, journalists, environmentalists, doctors, politicians and students along with other professionals locked hands with ordinary people around the trees at the park with a vow to save the greenery.

In an emotion-choked voice, Professor Chowdhury welcomed the people who joined their

See Page 12 Col 3

HC order Restrain from arresting or raiding house of Moni Begum

By SC Correspondent

The High Court Division yesterday by an order restrained the Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Inspector General of Police and Officers-in-Charge of Motiheel and Sutrapur Police Station from raiding the house of Moni Begum, a Jatiyatabadi Mahila Dal ac-

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A human chain was formed at Osmany Udyan yesterday.

—Star photo

Beyond the boundary Above All Else

By Shakil Kasem

First the facts. The last 96 hours of Sachin Tendulkar's life were spent in the following manner: almost twenty four hours in transit and flying from and to London, the rest of it in coming to terms with the

loss of someone who had given him life and been an integral part of it for 26 years. The remaining were spent in fighting jet lag and devising means to tidy the internal mess that his

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TODAY'S MATCHES

Bangladesh vs Scotland
Venue: Edinburgh
Live Coverage: BTV and ESPN (3:45 pm)

West Indies vs New Zealand
Venue: Southampton
Live Coverage: Star Sports (3:45 pm)

TOMORROW'S MATCH

England vs Zimbabwe
Venue: Trent Bridge
Live Coverage: BTV and Star Sports (3:45 pm)

India trounce Kenya by 94 runs Tendulkar's terrific ton

BRISTOL, England, May 23: A jet-lagged and grieving Sachin Tendulkar smashed an unbeaten 140 off 101 balls as India trounced Kenya by 94 runs here on Sunday to keep their World Cup hopes alive, reports AFP.

Tendulkar, who rejoined his team-mates 24 hours earlier after attending his father's funeral in Bombay, shared a record World Cup stand of 237 with Rahul Dravid, who remained unbeaten on 104.

The pair added 102 in the last 10 overs as India, needing win to stay in contention after two successive defeats, piled up their highest one-day score of 329 for two.

Seamer Debashish Mohanty, playing his first match of the tournament, then claimed a career-best haul of four for 56 as Kenya were restricted to 235 for seven.

India must, however, still defeat reigning champions Sri Lanka on Wednesday and hosts England on Saturday in their last two group A matches to qualify for the Super Six second round.

Tendulkar had said his mother wanted him to return to salvage India's World Cup campaign and he did just that when he came in at number four to hit 16 boundaries and three sixes in his 22nd one-day century.

He completed the emotional innings with a six before walking off to a standing ovation from a sell-out crowd of 8,500 at the Nevil Road ground.

The 26-year-old, sorely missed in India's three-run defeat at Zimbabwe's hands on Wednesday, had also received a warm greeting as he

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A view from the Gully

By Tawfiq Aziz Khan

The Rolls Royce carrying the hopes of the 'inventors' of cricket on a smooth ride suddenly bumped into a roadblock. A full-grown African lion was leisurely stretched on that picturesque road that led to the safari park just round the bend. By the time the occupants of the comfortable coach woke up from their sweet dreams, it was almost over, at least for the time being.

Even allowing for a liberal percentage of human error factor, it must be said in all fairness that the decisions, coming in quick succession, against Alec Stewart and Nasser Hussain, were a bit harsh. Umpire Sriniwas Venkataraghavan of India, normally known as an astute judge of the proceedings on the field and a former test player (off spinner) of repute, was unlikely, in more ways

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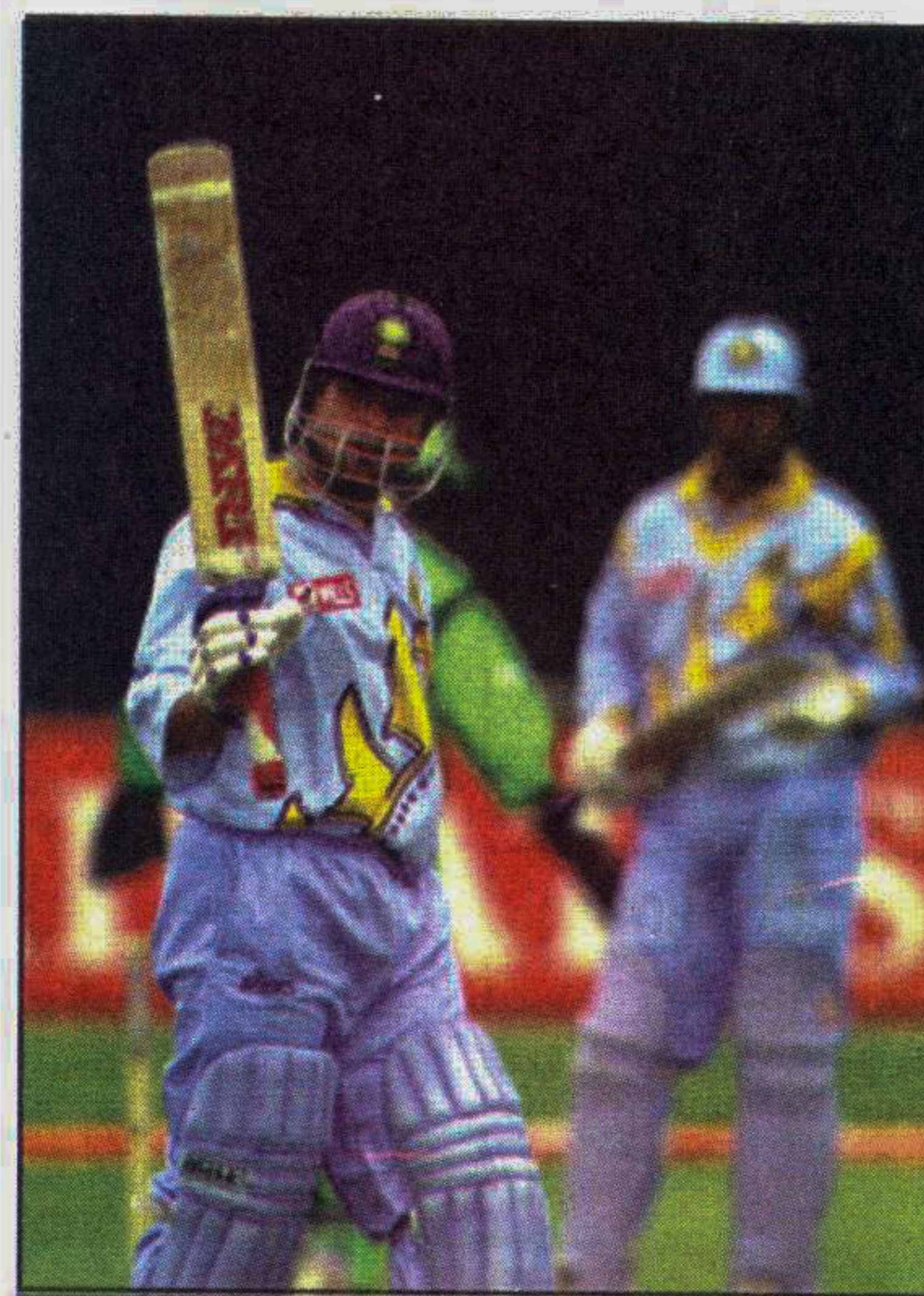
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SACHIN TENDULKAR
(India)
Man of the Match
India vs Kenya



INZAMAMUL HAQ
(Pakistan)
Man of the Match
Australia vs Pakistan



Sachin Tendulkar acknowledges the crowds applause after reaching his half-century against Kenya at bristol yesterday.

— AFP photo

Pakistan beat Australia in drama-packed tie

HEADINGLEY, May 23: Australia's World Cup hopes were in tatters today as they went down in a drama-packed match with Pakistan by 10 runs, reports AFP.

A second consecutive defeat for Steve Waugh's highly-rated side left them tottering on the brink of a first-round exit.

Pakistan, meanwhile, ominously impressive, made it three wins in a row in group B and can now prepare for the next stage of the tournament.

Inzamamul Haq, with 81, and some ferocious late-order

hitting saw Pakistan recover from 46 for three to make 275 for eight after being put in.

Australia, however, took the game to the final over before Pakistan skipper Wasim Akram sealed the game with two wickets. Akram ended with four for 40.

Australia, after losing pinch-hitter Adam Gilchrist third ball and then suffering a top-order collapse, had gone down fighting.

Steve Waugh and Michael Bevan came together at 101 for

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