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## PM leaves for US tomorrow

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leaves here tomorrow morning for Washington on a week-long visit to the United States, reports BSS.

She will be accompanied by the State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Foreign Secretary CM Shafi Sami, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr S A Samad and press secretary to the Prime Minister Jawadul Karim.

During her stay in the USA, the prime minister will deliver a major policy address on "Leading a Country in Transition: Challenges and Opportunities" at the John F Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University on April 5.

On April 8, Sheikh Hasina will receive Pearl S Buck Award

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## Nasim suspects

By Staff Correspondent

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim suspected yesterday that BNP chief Khaleda Zia and her Rajakar associates' kept US President Bill Clinton from visiting the National Mausoleum at Savar.

Replying to a question from Abdul Latif Mirza of Awami League in the Jatiya Sangsad, Nasim also accused BNP, Jamaat and other anti-Liberation forces of making an abortive bid to foil Clinton's visit to Bangladesh.

We are trying to find out who sent fax to and had communication with the United

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## Massive campaign ahead of grand rally in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Apr 2: All Party Action Committee of opposition parties launched a massive campaign in the port city ahead of the grand rally here on April 4.

Chief of four mainstream opposition parties — Khaleda Zia of BNP, H M Ershad of Jatiya Party, Golam Azam of Jamaat-e-Islam and Maulana Azizur Rahman of Islami Oikya Jote — are scheduled to address the rally on a single platform at the outer stadium.

Several hundred opposition activists riding motorcycles went drove through the city roads today to garner support for the rally.

JP sources said party chief Ershad is expected to arrive by road tomorrow.

The three other chiefs are likely to fly on April 4.

## Our new numbers

19 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215  
Phones: 812 4944, 812 4955  
& 812 4966  
Fax: 812 5155

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April Sun Rises Sun Sets  
3 - 6:16pm  
4 5:37am

### Prayer Timings

April 3  
Fair 5:00 5:30  
Zohr 1:00 1:30  
Asr 4:45 5:00  
Magrib 6:20 6:25  
Esha 8:00 8:30

Source: Islamic Foundation

# The Daily Star

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## Block 7 goes to Unocal, BAPEX partner

This is for the first time that BAPEX became partner in gas exploration with an international oil company.

Block 7 is located in the southwestern region, west of the existing Shahbazpur Gasfield.

Negotiations are in progress for signing more PSCs with other companies that took part in the first-ever formal international bidding. Earlier, there was no formal bidding and international oil companies were awarded eight gas blocks on selection basis.

As per the agreement signed on the basis of a model PSC, BAPEX will get 10 per cent carried interest without any capital investment, a unique condi-

tion that is absent from the PSCs signed in the first round in early 90s.

It provides Unocal Bangladesh Limited, a subsidiary of US-based Unocal Corporation, with terms and conditions for conducting exploratory drilling within five years from the signing of the PSC, a shift from the bidding document that allows three years for the works.

After prolonged negotiations, Petrobangla hurriedly initiated PSCs with Pangea, Unocal and Tullow-Chevron-Texaco in March ahead of US President Bill Clinton's visit on March 20. At least one PSC was supposed to be signed during his

sources Khaled Anwar signed the deal on behalf of the government.

Chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on energy ministry Abul Hasanat Abdulla, state minister for energy Rafigul Islam, energy secretary Dr Toufig-E-Elahi Chowdhury and officials of Petrobangla and BAPEX witnessed the signing ceremony.

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## Bill seeking changes in PSA placed

By Staff Correspondent

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim moved a bill yesterday seeking some major changes in the controversial Public Safety (Special Provision) Act.

The amendments to the PSA

came two months after the law was passed by parliament on January 30, in absence of the Opposition. While assenting to the bill on February 15, President Shahabuddin Ahmed reportedly requested the government to change certain 'objectionable' provisions in the law.

However, the bill sought

changes in the controversial provision that denied the appellate court the authority to grant bail to an accused until his or her appeal was disposed of by the court. According to the proposed amendment, the appellate court can consider a bail petition after examining the

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gravity of the offence, related documents and evidences.

The bill also sought dropping of Section 13(5) of the PSA that authorised the tribunal to recommend criminal prosecution against 'wilful lapses' on the part of police in conducting investigation.

The bill also proposed addition of a proviso to Section 13(4) of the PSA. According to the proviso, a tribunal would enjoy the authority to convert an accused in a case to an witness of the same case, provided that the accused make a confession statement under Section 164 of the CrPC.

The bill proposed another proviso to be added to Section 14(3). The proviso, if adopted by the House, would not allow the tribunals to award any punishment.

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## PM tells Temple Prescribed reform measures need serious review

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said that the reforms measures prescribed by the development partners of the country need a serious review as many of those seem to have become old-fashioned, reports BSS.

The old-fashioned reform measures did not seem to work and therefore a serious review of those reform measures is now necessary, the Prime Minister said this while talking to World Bank Country Director Frederic T. Temple who met her at her office at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban. They discussed important issues relating to financial reforms and other programme.

Sheikh Hasina said while discussing the review the World Bank should consult its development partners in the Third World, the Principal Secretary

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## Draft laws for making 2 new city corps okayed

The cabinet yesterday approved draft laws for upgrading Barisal and Sylhet municipalities of city corporations, reports UNB.

With these two, the country will have six city corporations. The existing four are in Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna.

The approval was given at a regular cabinet meeting held at the PM's office with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The cabinet also approved the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh Ordinance 1976 amendment proposal.

It further endorsed Bangladesh's assent to the amendment to the International Monetary Fund Articles of Agreement.

## Body to curb anti-social activities in 3 posh areas

The government has formed a committee headed by the Director General of the Narcotics Control Department to curb anti-social activities at the guest houses in Gulshan, Banani and Bardiha areas of the capital.

The committee has already started operation to stop such

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The PWD's demolition squad levels an illegal extension to a building housing a school on Road No 6/A in Dhanmondi yesterday (left), and the students don't seem to mind the break.

— Star photo

## Rajshahi-5 byelection Aggrieved AL leaders back 'rebel' Raihan

From Abdul Wadood

RAJSHAHI, Apr 2: Most local leaders of ruling Awami League have extended their all-out support to 'rebel' party leader Raihanul Haque Raihan who is contesting the Rajshahi-5 parliamentary by-elections as an independent candidate.

Raihan, nominated by the AL nomination, three other local leaders of the party are also contesting the by-elections as independent candidates. They include Azizul Azam, Chairman of Gargari union under Bagha thana and Brig (Retd) Anisur Rahman, who was AL candidate in 1996 election.

Residents of the AL nomination, three other local leaders of the party are also contesting the by-elections as independent candidates. They include Azizul Azam, Chairman of Gargari union under Bagha thana and Brig (Retd) Anisur Rahman, who was AL candidate in 1996 election.

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## Loadshedding in DESA areas static at 200mw

By Staff Correspondent

Dwellers of Dhaka thana and its adjacent areas are having great difficulty in the early summer days due to frequent power failure in almost every parts of the city.

The amount of loadshedding in Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (DESA) command areas remained 200 megawatt for the last five days, sources said.

Residents of different parts of the city alleged that power outage happens twice and even thrice a day. "Sometimes we have to face power disruption throughout the day or night," said a resident of Demra yesterday.

Most parts of the city experienced blackout from 7 pm for about an hour last night. Besides, Lalbagh, Postogola, Kalta and some parts of the Old City experienced yesterday the worst power shortage in recent times. The maximum temperature in the capital yesterday was 35.1 degree Celsius, highest of this season so far.

Meanwhile, 13 out of 63 power generation units of the country remained shut down yesterday. Power was suspended at seven of these units for about a month. The number was 19 on Wednesday last.

His supporters also went on the rampage at the thana headquarters and stopped plying of vehicles on March 28 on hearing of

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