

## Speedy trial courts begin functioning today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Activities of the Speedy Trial Court under the Law and Order Disruption Crimes Act begin across the country today.

Already nine courts have been set up in the metropolitan cities of Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna while the special courts in all other district towns would be formed within this week.

In this regard, the home ministry yesterday held an orientation seminar titled Proper Enforcement and Successful Implementation of Law and Order Disruption Crimes (Speedy Trial) Act in its conference room.

Home Minister Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) Altaf Hossain Chowdhury asked officials to maintain transparency while applying the new law.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

## INSIDE TODAY

Article 4

'Criminals in uniform'

Column: Between the Lines  
Kuldip Nayar

Law and our Right 6,7

Mediation in family courts of Bangladesh; and Jenin refugee camp: A humanitarian catastrophe

# Khaleeda, Larma talk CHT accord implementation

## Withdrawal of army camps demanded, PM to visit hill region



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia listens to Chairman of Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council Jyotirindriya Bodhipriyo Larma alias Shantu Larma during a meeting with PCJSS leaders at her office yesterday.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday had talks with the leaders of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) over the progress in the implementation of the CHT Peace Accord.

They also talked about strengthening the CHT Regional Council and measures to improve the law and order in three hill districts during the one-hour meeting.

The PCJSS asked the prime minister to withdraw army camps from the CHT and also make the Land Commission operational, according to sources.

This was for the first time that the PCJSS leaders met Prime Minister Khaleda Zia since she came to office in October.

"It was sort of a courtesy call, since for the first time we met the prime minister... We had a good discussion. We have focussed on many issues," PCJSS Chief Jyotirindro Bodhipriyo Larma alias Shantu Larma told The Daily Star last night.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## Mahima suicide case: Charges framed against all 12 accused

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The Additional District Magistrate's Court yesterday framed charges against all the 12 accused in Mahima suicide case.

Magistrate Md Reaz Ahmed framed the charges under Section 201 and 306 of Bangladesh Penal Code (BPC).

The court also summoned four witnesses to appear before the court on May 2.

The accused are Ilias Hossain Uzzal, Selim, Faruk, Farid, Mosharrif Hossain Musa (Uzzal's father), Abdul Mutalib (Faruk's father), Khalilur Rahman (Selim's father), Sekandor Ali (Farid's father), Zahangir Hossain (Selim's uncle), Kajem Ali (Zahangir's brother), Saiful Islam (Selim's brother) and Shariful Islam (Selim's brother-in-law).

Of the 12 accused, six are now detained in jail hajat while the rest six absconding.

On February 19, Mahima, daughter of an Awami League activist in Puthia, committed suicide after being gang raped by four JCD cadres and their relatives.

Following the incident, two cases were filed with Puthia thana accusing 12 persons.

## Shifting of UNO office sparks protest Fierce clashes in Sandwip: 3 killed, 50 injured

ABDULLAH -AL MAHMUD, Ctg

At least three persons were shot dead and over 50 injured, 30 of them bullet-hit, at Sandwip in clashes over shifting of the UNO office to the new part of the town from the old part on Friday night.

The clashes occurred intermittently since Thursday evening. The dead were identified as Md Nasir, 25, Akhter, 13 and Javed Hossain, 20. Md Nasir and Akhter were killed on the spot while Zabhed Hossain died at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) yesterday morning.

The OC of Sandwip thana, Fazlur Rahman, confirmed two deaths but unofficial sources claimed that five persons were killed.

Sandwip BNP leader Azmat Ali Bahadur and general secretary of Sandwip Merchants Association Muktader Mowla Selim claimed that two bodies were thrown into the sea.

Of the injured, seven are now under treatment at CMCH with critical bullet wounds. They are Zaved, Monir Hossain, Hafez Md Moslem Uddin, Md Hanif, Didarul Alam, Md Akber Hossain and Md Russel.

The clashes involving people of old and new parts of the town and police began Thursday evening when the local administration attempted to shift the office to Haramia from Harishpur.

Over 200 policemen led by Additional District Magistrate Golam Mostafa and Additional SP (North) Aurangajeb Mahboob, sent from Chittagong, remained deployed in the off shore town yesterday as a tense situation was prevailing, sources here said.

Unconfirmed reports said the UNO office remained under siege yesterday evening by the people who are resisting the shifting. The local administration held two rounds of talks yesterday with their representatives.

This correspondent could not contact any quarters at Sandwip over telephone despite repeated attempts yesterday evening.

As the authorities tried to shift the UNO office Thursday evening, several

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

## EC warns 4 ministers for violating election code

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With only four days left for the polls in three city corporations, the Election Commission (EC) has warned four ministers for violating the election code of conduct.

The warning came yesterday when electioneering was getting momentum in Dhaka, Khulna and Rajshahi cities, and EC's preparations were almost complete.

The polls will take place on April 25.

According to EC sources, Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Agriculture Minister Matur Rahman Nizami,

Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid and State Minister for Post and Telecommunications Aminul Haque were served with notices last night.

Quoting press reports, the EC letter said the ministers, using their official privileges, took part in campaign in favour of ruling party's mayoral candidate Mizanur Rahman Minu in Rajshahi.

The letter noted that such campaign by ministers is a violation of the election code of conduct.

Some sources however claimed that the ministers went there to solve a dispute among contestants from the ruling coalition.

Meanwhile, nine mayoral candi-

dates in the Dhaka City Corporation at a meeting with Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Syed at his office alleged that the ruling party mayoral candidate was violating the code of conduct.

They also demanded action against the candidates who are violating the code of conduct. The CEC assured them of necessary steps in this regard, the sources said.

The nine mayoral candidates are Advocate Abed Raja, Afzalul Haque Sikder, Kamrul Hasan, Noorjahan Taleb, Krishak Mohammad Sadeq, Shamsul Haque Jahid, Amanullah Sikder and Syed Motaher Hossain.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

## Body of Kapasia AL activist recovered from Shitalakhya

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The body of Awami League activist Jamaluddin Fakir, allegedly tortured to death at Kapasia police station in Gazipur district, was recovered from the river Shitalakhya yesterday.

Jamaluddin, who was doing his graduation at Alam Government College, was 'missing' from Kapasia thana since Friday morning.

According to sources, Kapasia police led by the OC, Gazi Mainuddin, picked up Jamal from his village Targaon in Kapasia at about 1:30 am on Wednesday. They told his family that he would be released after 'interrogation' at the thana.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

## Scrap new black law: Hasina Bid to frustrate people's growing anger over govt persecution, misrule, rally told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the government to immediately scrap the Law and Order Disruption Crimes Act (LODCA) which she said is meant to "frustrate people's growing anger against political persecution and misrule".

"The black law has denied people's constitutional right to get justice and enjoy democratic rights. It has also curbed independence of the judiciary," she told a public meeting at the Paltan Maidan in the capital yesterday.

She said the government-controlled magistrates of the special courts being set up to facilitate the

enforcement of the new law could never dispense justice. Besides, the fresh law will enable the government to punish or spare whoever it wishes, she feared.

"In fact, the law aims to eliminate the Awami League activists and sympathisers, for the coalition government is not confident of its mandate in the rigged October election," the opposition leader said.

The government is making a mockery of law in the name of speedy trial, she said.

"Have they banned the Awami League in Bangladesh? Does multiparty democracy exist in the country? If the answers are affirmative, then why the ruling coalition is attempting to make the country's most popular party non-existent?"

"You should stand up to the mounting repression by the government... this simply cannot be accepted... we must not tolerate it any more," she told her audience.

Hasina, also the leader of the opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad, reminded the gathering that the people forced the previous BNP

government to stand down in 1996 as it tried to cling to power through a rigged, farcical election.

The AL organised the meeting on the first day of its six-day fresh campaign in protest at the enactment of LODCA, removal of the Bangabandhu's portrait from public offices through a legislation, 'persecution' of the opposition, rising crimes and 'misrule' by the coalition government.

A total of 18 AL teams comprising party central leaders are scheduled to embark on a countrywide anti-government campaign beginning today.

Hasina blasted the BNP-led coalition for making a fresh 'black' law despite its election commitment to repeal the Special Powers Act and the Public Safety Act. "They have made the new law only to use it against the Awami League and other anti-government forces since they need to make their power absolute."

The AL chief also accused the BNP-Jamaat coalition of creating a

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## Alcatel anomalies cast doubt over telecom deals

ABU SAEED KHAN

Questionable payment issues have put telephone projects in the public and private sector on hold.

Last December, the Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) negotiated two deals with Alcatel. Later, the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MOPT) directed it to renegotiate the contracts.

As Alcatel is yet to accept the amendments, installation of 27,500 telephones remains suspended.

On December 27, 2001, the BTTB issued two purchase orders

for Alcatel to install 24,000 and 3,500 telephones on turnkey basis in Dhaka at a contract value of 1,735,686 and 237,388 euros respectively.

Of the 24,000 lines, 2,000 are for Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, 4,000 for Moghbazar, 3,000 for Nilkhet, 4,000 for Mirpur, 5,000 for Gulshan and 6,000 for Uttara. Additional 3,500 lines were to be installed in Sher-E-Bangla Nagar under a separate project.

Besides incurring 36,497 euros for installation services, the BTTB would pay 205,345 euros to Alcatel as 'Engineering in France.'

Despite having no exchange in Uttara, Alcatel has been contracted there to install 6,000 lines as proprietary works. The Daily Star reported these anomalies in January 7 this year, and both the BTTB and Alcatel protested.

On January 12, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) demanded clarification from the MOPT on the allegations. Subsequently, the ministry served a 24-hour ultimatum to Alcatel to explain the 'Engineering in France' and also sought explanation from the BTTB on the reported anomalies.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

## Fresh gunfight between PCJSS, UPDF: 2 killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Two persons were shot dead and another was injured with bullet in a fresh gunfight between the activists of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) and United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) in Rupban area under Barkal upazila yesterday morning.

The dead were identified as Proshen Chakma, 45, and Kanti Chakma, 50.

Following the clash, police and army personnel went to the spot and arrested a tribal youth named Subash Chakma, 25. They also

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

## PDB gas bills Ministry's quest for a solution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Power Division of the Energy Ministry will hold a meeting with Petrobangla and Power Development Board (PDB) this week to find a solution regarding payment of PDB's Tk 512 crore arrears.

Petrobangla had earlier announced that if PDB failed to pay the arrears -- equivalent to PDB's seven months' gas consumption bill-- it would be compelled to cut gas supply to power plants.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

The Daily Star  
RANGS TOSHIBA  
WORLD CUP QUIZ  
Round 1 on Page 15

See the rules and coupon of  
The Daily Star  
RANGS TOSHIBA  
WORLD CUP QUIZ  
Round 1 on Page 15

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Apr 21		6-22 pm
Apr 22	5-31 am	

Prayer Timings		
Apr 21		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-15
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-25	6-30
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation