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## Oldest civilisation dug out

Road, fortified citadel, artefacts in Wari village date back to 450 BC

SHAMIM ASHRAF

The excavation of an ancient road suggests Narsingdi was part of a 2,450-year-old civilisation and formed the eastern fringe of Mauryan Empire.

A prime trade centre flourished in Narsingdi that maintained contacts with contemporary South Asian and Roman civilisations through waterways, archaeologists citing recent finds in Belabo upazila in Narsingdi said.

The March 21 excavation of country's oldest road, a fortified citadel and a raft of artefacts dating back to 450 BC in Wari village promised to redefine history of eastern India and embolden the theory of the Brahmaputra civilisation.

Examination of charcoal samples from the site in 2001 by Netherlands' Centrum voor Isotopen Onderzoek' also spoke of human habitation and industry in the area in 450 BC, dwarfing the ancient aura of Mahasthangarh, which flourished 80 years later.

After finding rouletted and knobbed pottery from Wari and Bateshwar villages in 2000 and 2001, archaeologists suggested Buddhism dominated life in the urban centre.

**FABLED ARTEFACTS**

About three years ago, archaeologists found the pottery and other archaeological treasures

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LOCATION MAP ON PAGE 11



SHARIFUL ISLAM

The government took the superintendents of police (SPs) out of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) to quell a bitter dispute over precedence of ranks of military officials over those of police.

After a series of brainstorming sessions, the government finally decided to resolve the issue by transferring six SPs from Rab in Wednesday's major reshuffle of police administration, a top official of the home ministry said yesterday seeking anonymity.

The official said the SPs were highly aggrieved when the government designated them as deputy directors (DDs) of Rab, placing them under wing commanders and lieutenant colonels of the armed forces as directors or battalion commanders of Rab. The makeup of the elite anti-crime force made army officials of equal rank equal to SPs as DDs.

In the Rab hierarchy, director general (DG) is the top man, with additional DG, director, DD, assistant director (AD) and deputy assis-

tant director following him. An additional inspector general of police (IGP) will be the DG of Rab, additional deputy IGP will be additional DG, officers of armed forces of lieutenant colonel, major and captain ranks will be battalion commanders or directors, DDs and ADs.

A police official said SPs held the commanding posts in the police force but in Rab they were downgraded to the second-in-command position, with army officers in charge as battalion commanders. He said many of them felt that placing an 'SP under an army official of equivalent rank would undermine the dignity of the police rank.'

"The home ministry has dropped the SPs from Rab to maintain cohesiveness and integrity in inter-departmental ranking," said another official of the ministry. He said the government took the decision on its failure to reach an amicable solution.

The government in a gazette notification on February 17 appointed six SP-rank police officials to Rab. They are SM Ruhul

Amin, ex-SP of Rajbari, Rafiqul Islam, former SP of Satkhira, Helal Uddin Badri, ex-SP of Narayanganj, Mazharul Hoque, former deputy commissioner (DC) of Rapid Action Team (Rat), Delwar Hossain Mian, ex-SP of Special Branch and Moinul Islam, former SP of Meherpur.

In Wednesday's reshuffle, Ruhul was transferred to Jhalkathi as SP, Rafiqul to the Police Headquarters as AIGP, Helal to the Special Branch (SB) in Dhaka as special SP, Mazharul to Dhaka Metropolitan Police as deputy police commissioner, Delwar to the SB in Dhaka as special SP and Moinul to Rajbari as SP.

The Jatiya Sangsads passed the Armed Police Battalions (Amendment) Act 2003 in July last to pave way for formation of Rab. The over 5,000-men force draws its members from the armed forces, police and ansars.

Four Rab battalions will initially operate in Dhaka and one each in Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna.

Tk 402 crore is being spent on launching the elite force and the government will allocate Tk 80 crore a year to run it.

Police reshuffle to soup up security in Apr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Wednesday's decision for police reshuffle was made as a part of the government plan to tighten up security and anti-crime measures in response to the April-30 deadline set by Awami League for the BNP-led coalition to relinquish power sources said.

The transfers of three additional deputy inspector generals (Add'l DIGs) and 28 superintendents of police (SP) followed an exclusive meeting between the prime minister and the state minister for home affairs Wednesday afternoon.

Police officials said the changes were made based on reports of different intelligence agencies and more changes were in the offing to tackle the country's political situation this month.

"We have received specific complaints against some of the officials from local lawmakers and leaders of the ruling alliance," said a home ministry official.

According to the intelligence reports, the opposition parties have already finished their preparations

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Army called out to watch water supply

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Authorities posted army to six zones and the System Operation Centre of Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) yesterday to smooth water supply and avert violence over the dry season water crisis that may persist in April-May.

"It's a deterrent to possible mal-practice of Wasa staff at the field level and mob violence in the event of a water crisis," Wasa Managing Director (MD) ANM Akhtar Hossain said.

Army personnel will patrol the Wasa zones, visit water pumps and prevent any disruption in supply, created by Wasa staff and unscrupulous locals for personal gains, he said.

Akhtar Hossain said the army teams would continue till May 31 and Wasa would bear all operational costs.

Depletion of groundwater level and frequent power failures in the dry season that halt operation of water pumps increases the shortfall in water supply, the MD pointed out.

He said the suspension of power

supply in Jatrabari from 8:30am till noon Wednesday caused a shortfall of 1 crore litres an hour in Wasa water output. But people will hardly understand such problems, he added.

In the past, local ruffians in many areas obstructed water supply either by taking over operation of the pumps or capturing Wasa water lorries, and sold water cashing in on the dry season crisis. A section of Wasa staff was allegedly involved in the mischievous for money.

On the allegation, Akhtar Hossain said Wasa staff sometimes connived with the local ruffians or yielded to their pressure to obstruct normal water supply.

A pump operator at Kazi Bari (Biswa Road) pump under Wasa zone-5 said army teams will cooperate with them in ensuring equitable supply of water in all areas and addressing any unusual situation.

Army deployment is meant to ease water crisis in the dry season through smooth distribution, said an operator at Kuratali pump (Badda) in the same zone.

## Security van in Ctg ambushed

Tk 56 lakh looted, five injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The main opposition Awami League (AL) yesterday cut its April 7 dawn-to-dusk hartal by an hour to clear way for World Health Organisation (WHO) programmes marking International Health Day.

"We complied with a WHO request and decided to enforce the hartal from 6:00am to 5:00pm," said AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil, emerging from a party presidium meeting, chaired by AL President Sheikh Hasina at Dhammandi office.

Jalil confirmed that the 6:00am to 6:00pm shutdown scheduled for April 8 would remain unchanged.

The Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) of Hasanul Haq Inu also called hartal for April 7-8 in a simultaneous demonstration against the government.

The AL meeting also decided to

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admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Managing Director of the textile mills SM Nurul Huda Chowdhury said the money was withdrawn from the bank in the presence of an authorised employee of the mills for payment of salary and wages of about 2,500 employees and workers. The Group 4 security men kept the money in a sealed trunk.

"I think information was leaked out. Police quizzed some of our employees and filed a general diary," he said.

Sources linked 'Gitti' Nasir, an Islami Chhatra Shibir cadre, and some ruling alliance activists as involved in the incident. Alliance leaders denied the allegation.

The deputy commissioner (north) of Chittagong Metropolitan Police said law enforcers launched raids in places to recover the money and nab the criminals.

7 doctors, staff in Sirajganj suspended for duty neglect

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The director general of the directorate of health services yesterday instantaneously suspended seven doctors and staff, while on a surprise visit to an upazila health complex in Sirajganj district, he found them absent from the duties.

A health directorate source said that during his sudden visit to Chouiali upazila health complex from 10:30am to 11:30am yesterday, the director general Prof Mizanur Rahman found Dr Lokman Hakim, Dr Harun-ur Rashid, Shariful Islam, office assistant, A K Shamsul Huq,

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## India catch history

REUTERS, Multan

India sealed their first Test win on Pakistani soil, beating the hosts by an innings and 52 runs on Thursday.

Pakistan, 207 for nine overnight, were bowled out for 216 after facing just 12 balls on the fifth morning of the first Test as India took a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

The Indians had lost five and drawn 15 of their previous 20 Tests in Pakistan.

Pakistan's Younis Youhana struck a fighting 112, his 11th test century, but left-arm paceman Irfan Pathan had him mis-hit a pull shot to Rahul Dravid at mid-wicket to end the match.

Anil Kumble was the best bowler of India's second innings, grabbing

six wickets for 72, but Pathan's career-best four for 100 in the first had been instrumental in allowing the tourists to enforce the follow-on.

India had amassed 675 for five when they batted, with Virender Sehwag scoring a record 309 and Sachin Tendulkar 194 not out.

"It's fantastic to lead the side that won our first Test in Pakistan," said Dravid, India's stand-in captain.

"Sehwag batted brilliantly, he's done a great job for us, and the bowlers bowled with a lot of heart and character on a wicket that didn't offer them very much."

It was only India's second innings victory over Pakistan. The first was the inaugural Test between

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BNP MP blasts ministry for power outage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

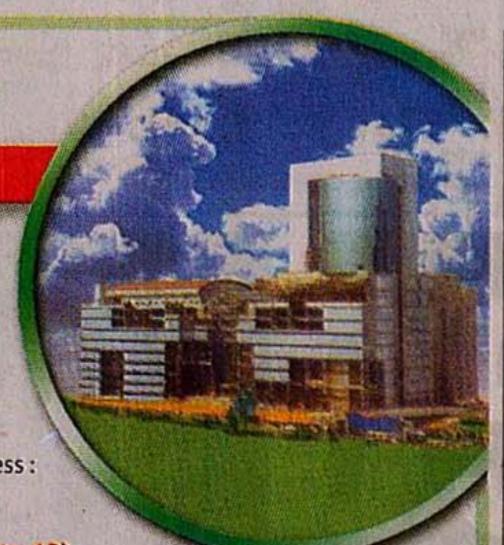
A ruling BNP lawmaker yesterday came down hard on the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources for a 48-hour non-stop power outage in his constituency.

Habibul Islam Habib, elected from Satkhira, at a parliamentary standing committee meeting said incessant power failure caused suffering to the people and hindered irrigation.

The state minister for energy at the meeting resented Power Development Board (PDB) for not informing him of the incident.

The parliamentary standing

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**BASHUNDHARA GROUP**

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**'Bashundhara City'**

13/Ka/1, Panthapath, Dhaka-1205 (Level : 11 to 19)

Phone : 8158025-34 Fax : 9128319

(Other new Phone and Fax Numbers will be intimated to all concerned in due course of time)

2nd April 2004

Sd /  
By General Manager  
(Administration)

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