

450 BC CIVILISATION

# Govt to preserve Narsingdi site

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will preserve the archaeological site in Narsingdi where the country's oldest road, dating back to 450 BC, was unearthed last month.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Selima Rahman assured the excavators of this during her visit there yesterday, when they asked her for immediate government steps to preserve the site.

Selima hailed the excavation team of Jahangirnagar University (JU) Department of Archaeology for

its epoch-making work 'in quest of the country's root' and for unravelling further evidences of the region's glorious past.

"This findings will help us know better our thousands of years-old history and make us proud of our civilisation," Selima wrote in the visitors' book.

Joint Secretary Masudur Rahman of the ministry and Department of Archaeology Director Dewan Delwar Hossain accompanied the minister.

A JU team led by Associate Professor Sufi Mustafizur Rahman, who has been scraping and hammer-

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

Police load barbed-wire fences into a truck on Dhaka University campus yesterday to put them up as roadblocks at Russell Square during an anti-government hartal today.

## Myanmar PM visits CEPZ, leaves for home

UNB, Dhaka

Myanmar Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt visited Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ) yesterday, the last day of his three-day tour of Bangladesh, and showed keen interest in setting up such exclusive economic zone in his country.

He appreciated the success and achievement of Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) in "strengthening the economic base of the country," said a BEPZA release.

Earlier, Executive Chairman of the BEPZA Brig General (retd) M Zakir Hossain welcomed the Myanmar prime minister, who was accompanied by Bangladesh Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan, to the CEPZ.

Zakir Hossain, in his welcome speech, called upon the Myanmar entrepreneurs to invest in Bangladesh Export Processing Zones (BEPZs), particularly in Chittagong, because of its close proximity to Myanmar.

During his visit, the Myanmar prime minister, who is leading a 40-member delegation, discussed

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

## Govt firm on trial of sensational cases : PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has said the government is firm on trial of all sensational cases to award punishment to the culprits.

She mentioned that the government had set up speedy trial courts for quick trial of the sensational murder cases, which Awami League government had failed to do.

The prime minister expressed the views while talking with the newly elected office bearers of Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) at her office yesterday.

She said 42 sensational murder cases have so far been disposed of in the trial courts, which are now pending with the higher court.

"The government wants quick disposal of those cases at the final stage," Khaleda told the reporters.

A 17-member delegation of the committee led by its President Alamgir Hossain and General Secretary Saleh Shibly made a courtesy call on the prime minister.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Others members of the delegation are Vice President Ziaur Rahman Modhu, Joint Secretary Patrick Saha, Finance Secretary Abu Kawser, Organising Secretary Mahmudur Rahman Khokon, Publicity and Publication Secretary Sheikh Mamunur Rashid, Research and Training Secretary Tarun Sarkar, Cultural

Secretary Hasan Mahmud, office secretary Moshiur Rahman, executive members Nushrat Arshiana Chowdhury, Muzib Masud, Moniruzzaman Uzzal, Madhusudan Mondal, Aminul Huq Bhuiyan, Enamul Huq Enam and Homayun Kabir Khokon.

The prime minister said her party and government always believe in press freedom and stand for the welfare of journalist community.

Regarding repression on journalists in different incidents raised by the reporters, she said sometimes journalists may be harassed or come

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

## Traffic jam cuts can save Tk 1,000cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country can avert a yearly loss of about Tk 1,000 crore caused by the everyday traffic congestion in Dhaka by developing a modern urban transport infrastructure.

The city's principal roads lack bus bays and bus stoppages, automatic traffic signalling system, street lights, enough footpaths and a good drainage system, said Quamrul Islam Siddique, executive director of Dhaka Urban Transport Coordination Board (DTCB), quoting a survey at a press briefing yesterday.

Since last month the board has started working on formulating a

long-term multi-modal urban transport plan, titled Strategic Transport Plan (STP), that will cost several thousand crores of taka to implement, Quamrul said, adding the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Japan had already shown interest to invest in it.

At present roads in the city cover only eight percent of its space, compared to a 22 to 25 percent space required for a planned city. The total length of city roads, including primary (main), secondary, feeder and other narrow lanes, is 3,002km now.

The number of motor vehicles in

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## Islamist group's new deadline for declaring Ahmadiyyas non-Muslim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Khatme Nubuwat Committee Bangladesh yesterday threatened to launch a broader movement if the government does not declare Ahmadiyyas non-Muslim by June.

"Declare them non-Muslim or pay for it in the next general elections," Muhammad Shamsul Haq, chairman of the new anti-Ahmadiyya group, told the ruling coalition from a press conference at the National Press Club.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

## Outlaws issue death threat to Duta president

DU CORRESPONDENT

Outlawed Sarbabora Party members issued death threat against the Dhaka University Teachers Association (Duta) President Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique in a letter received on Sunday.

The letter reads, "Though Humayun Azad managed to survive, you won't."

The DU Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz, Duta and DU high

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

NGO workers on Monday came to the rescue of a girl from her desolation after being put through an ordeal of rape and weeklong confinement.

Daughter of a poor housemaid, the fatherless girl of 8 to 10 years of age was raped by a worker of a furniture shop in the city's Naiorup area about a week ago.

Salam, the rapist, however managed to hush up the matter with the help of some "mediators" who brokered a deal with the girl's mother by convincing her to keep quiet about it. Salam paid Tk 3,000 to the victim's mother and Tk 2,000 to the "brokers" and had the girl chained

up inside her thatched hut in the city's Jatapur area.

On Monday, the girl somehow broke free after a week's confinement. But this time, she was again raped by a local butcher named Ibrahim, who threatened her with dire consequences if she told anyone about it.

Later in the afternoon, a man in the city's Rikabi Bazaar area noticed the traumatised girl moving about aimlessly with chains around her neck. The man then took her over to Koishore Bangladesh, a non-government organisation (NGO) working for the welfare of distressed and underprivileged children. The NGO workers then took her to Sylhet

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

### Prayer Timings

| April 7 |       |        |
|---------|-------|--------|
|         | Azan  | Jamaat |
| Fajr    | 4-40  | 5-15   |
| Zohr    | 12-45 | 1-15   |
| Asr     | 4-45  | 5-00   |
| Maghrib | 6-21  | 6-24   |
| Esha    | 7-45  | 8-15   |

Source: Islamic Foundation

## Khaleda, Hasina to miss Istanbul meet

REAZ AHMAD

Both Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina will miss the first Congress of Democrats from Islamic World to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, on April 13 and 14 due to their political preoccupations at home, sources close to them said.

However, several senior leaders representing major political parties, both in power and in opposition, are going to attend the congress, jointly sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Washington-based National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the Turkish Democracy Foundation.

The expected participants from Bangladesh include BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's advisor M Rezaul Karim, BNP lawmaker Ziaur Rahman Khan, Gano Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina's political secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Jatiya Party (Ershad) lawmaker GM Kader and Jamaat-e-Islami central leader Quamaruzzaman, officials at Dhaka office of the NDI said.

Rezaul Karim told The Daily Star yesterday NDI Chairperson and

former US secretary of state Madeline Albright invited Khaleda Zia to participate in the congress, the first of its kind involving political leaders from predominantly Muslim countries. But she would not be able to attend, Karim said. "Ziaur Rahman (lawmaker) and I are going to attend and other leaders from different parties will also join it."

Karim, also a former ambassador, said the Turkish prime minister will open the congress and many world leaders and dignitaries are expected to attend it.

AL sources said Hasina would not be able to attend the congress as the opposition agitation is gaining momentum and the party's April 30 deadline to oust the BNP-led alliance government is nearing.

Saber Hossain Chowdhury told The Daily Star that against the post-Twin Tower (September 11, 2001) reality, the congress will provide a forum for interaction among leaders of the Islamic world who stand for democracy.

A senior NDI official in Dhaka, Saiful Karim, said they hope to finalise the list of participants from Bangladesh within a day or two.

NDI sources said participants would come from nearly 15 Muslim

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

An under-construction sewerage line at Jurain in Dhaka comes to a halt as extortionists forced workers to stop work in the wake of their failure to give them money. Houses and shops lining the ruptured road are at risk.