NEWS

The Daily Star

No alternative to BNP

Khaleda tells Joypurhat rally

UNB, Joypurhat

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday urged people to help maintain continuity of the present government to proceed uninterrupted with the tempo of development.

"There is no alternative to the BNP and alliance government to ensure people's welfare and country's development," she told a public meeting at Joypurhat Cement Factory ground.

Naming no names, Khaleda criticised a leader of an opposition party who she said has no work in the country and so is only going abroad spreading "propaganda" against the country.

'They unleashed chaos and anarchy on the streets damaging public property to hinder development flow. People did not vote them to power in the 2001 general elections for their acts of terrorism, corruption, destruction of public property and spreading propaganda abroad." she told the audience. The prime minister said people

don't want hartal and they have no faith in the opposition party as they don't keep their word given to the people.

Frustrating the opposition's move for discouraging foreign investors, she said many foreign countries and companies, including Dhabi, Tata of India, Malaysia, Japan, Italy and European Union

countries, are interested to invest in Bangladesh. The prime minister said they

succeeded in freeing the country from terrorism following various steps, including 'operation clean heart' and finally the formation of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab). "The opposition has gone mad

BDR, BSF in raw mood over tea plantation

UNB, Panchagarh

The border security forces of Bangladesh and India were in a confrontational state yesterday as the BDR obstructed tea plantation by the Indians on the zero line of the border violating international rules

Officials said several hundred Indian workers began tea plantation at Majheepara border close to the Panchangarh-Tetulia highway in the morning. They were backed by the BSF of Nayabari outpost, who were seen digging bunkers on the zero line.

BDR Personnel raised objection and asked for a flag meeting. Paying no heed, the BSF men continued digging bunkers and mobilising troops and heavy artillery on the border. BDR took retaliatory measures.

seeing the development and prog-ress of the country under the BNP led alliance government," she said.

for 4 hours in

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Barisal-Dhaka highway remained

blocked for 4 hours on Monday

evening due to clashes between

local people and police following the

arrest of five persons including the

imam of a local mosque at

Rahmatpur in Babuganj upazila

(OC) of Babuganj Police Station

arrested the imam, a union parishad

member and three women as sus-

Finding the imam absent before

the Asr prayer, the musullis (people

coming for prayer) became agi-

tated, organised a procession and

blocked the Barisal-Dhaka highway

They demanded immediate

release of arrestees as there was no

specific case or allegation against

Local leaders and activists of

As police led by OC Abdus

Meanwhile. Mizanur Rahman

different political parties including

pected Islamist fundamentalist.

Abdus Salehin, officer in charge

Barisal

under the district.

at about 5pm

them

Health Minister Khandokar Mosharraf Hossain, Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General and Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujaheed, Prime Minister's political Secretary Harris Chowdhury, State Minister for Housing Alamgir Kabir, and Rajshai Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu also

addressed the meeting.

HABIGANJ BY-POLLS Mubin Chy, 4 others submit nominations

Abu Lais Mohammad Mubin Chowdhury of the ruling BNP and four others yesterday submitted nomination papers for the April 25 by-election in Habiganj-3 constituthe BNP and Awami League joined

ency. the agitated mob. The others are Abdul Muktadir Chowdhury (Ind), Krishak Mohammad Sadeque (Krishak-Salehin tried to remove the road Sramik Mukti Andolan), Syed blockade, clashes erupted in which Mamun Miah (Ind) and Moqbul eight people including three police Hossain (Ind). personnel received minor injuries. Political circles here say the

independent candidates may finally step aside giving an easy sail for Abu Lais Mobin.

RANGAMATI ABDUCTION Highway blocked

No trace of 14 villagers

PCJSS rejects allegation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

None of the 14 villagers of Naniarchar upazila in Rangamati could be rescued as of yesterday evening, four days after their abduction.

Six separate army patrols have so far combed the suspected jungles. Reports say the abduction toll reached 22 in the past four days, in two separate incidents by gangs of indigenous armed insurgents that took place between 23 to 26 March.

The United Peoples'

Morachengri, Sapmara and Borpolepara on Saturday night. Later, in a message, the captors demanded Tk.10 lakh as ransom for their release. Meanwhile, eight people who

But the JSS in a press release

yesterday denied the accusation.

terrorists abducted the 14 villag-

ers of Rangimara, Sakkapara,

However, sources said armed

were kidnapped from the same upazila on March 23, including a primary school teacher, were set free on Saturday. Police said 15 armed men

stopped two Chander Gari (hu-

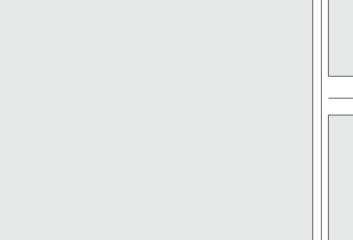
man carriers) in Bogachhari and

took the eight people to unknown

Democratic Front (UPDF), in an anti-peace accord issued here on Sunday evening, blamed the armed cadres belonging to the pro-peace accord Jono Sanghaty Samity (JSS) for the abduction.

places. A couple of days later, the captors set them free at a nearby jungle, they confirmed.

Assistant superintendent of police of Barisal went to the spot with a The seat fell vacant following the large contingent of police. death of former finance minister The demonstrators removed the SAMS Kibria in a grenade attack at People living in the bordering Boidyer Bazaar on January 27. roadblocks at about 9am after the areas have left their homes, fear-Mobin had lost to Kibria in the 2001 ing confrontation between the arrestees were unconditionally elections in this constituency with a border guards of the two counreleased. big margin. tries.



UNB, Habiganj

