



PHOTO: STAR  
The national flag flies at half-mast at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday to mourn Pope John Paul II.

### Bangladesh mourns Pope

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh yesterday observed mourning day to show respect to Pope John Paul II, who died early Sunday in holy Vatican City.

National flag was hoisted at half-mast in all government, semi-government, autonomous and private buildings and Bangladesh missions abroad as a mark of respect to the Pope.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

### Quaiyyum new IGP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday appointed Additional Inspector General of Police Abdul Quaiyyum the new Inspector General of Police (IGP).

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

### REVENUE SHORTFALL

## Govt to cut target by Tk 1,690cr

Plans budget revision aiming at Tk 30,500cr earning

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

As the tax department lags far behind its revenue-earning target, the government plans to lower the target by Tk 1,690 crore to Tk 30,500 crore by revising the budget for the current fiscal year (FY).

The revised figure came out at a meeting between the National Board of Revenue (NBR) and a visiting International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission that is reviewing the

country's current economic condition.

Sources said a finance ministry resource committee meeting soon will finalise the revised revenue target.

The revision would be a move made in the right direction, observed the IMF team led by the adviser to its Asia-Pacific Department, Nissanke Weerasinghe, at yesterday's meeting with NBR chief Khairuzzaman

Chowdhury in the chair.

Meeting sources said as the IMF delegates expressed the opinion that, under the present circumstances, the NBR should go for a Tk 35,590 crore revenue target for FY2005, the NBR officials told them the board has already planned a Tk 35,500 crore revised target.

In the revised revenue target under consideration, the earning at

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

## Kashmir peace buses cross border today

PTI, Srinagar

Terrorists may have issued repeated threats to them but the desire to meet their separated loved ones is too strong to stop the people from taking the first bus to Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

At least 24 of the 29 passengers expected to travel by the two inaugural buses today have already booked their tickets, ignoring threats and demonstrating a determination to make the historic effort a success.

Three passengers have opted out due to technical reasons, while two are yet to report to the authori-

ties.

Billed as the biggest confidence-building measure between India and Pakistan directly affecting the people of Jammu and Kashmir, the bus service is aimed at reuniting families of the state divided by the LoC after 57 years.

"I am sure nothing is going to happen during the journey. Let us see what happens later," said 62-year-old Khalid Hussain, one of the passengers bound for Muzaffarabad.

Hussain, who is travelling to Mirpur to meet his cousin, was threatened over his mobile phone by a caller from London. Earlier, his

name figured in the list of people threatened by four terrorist groups through a statement issued to the media.

"Threats are common in Jammu and Kashmir. We have to take these in our strides," he told the agency.

Hussain's wife Nasreen, who is undertaking the journey along with him, too is unperturbed. "I don't worry about the threats," she said. "Anyhow, everyone is going and so am I," she added.

Hussain says his relatives in Mirpur have also heard about the threat. "But they have said we should not cancel the visit," he said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8



### Kurd leader named Iraq president

AFP, Baghdad

Iraq's new parliament chose former Kurdish rebel fighter Jalal Talabani as the country's first freely elected president in history and Islamist Adel Abdel Mahdi and Sunni tribal

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

### Muktis' precious victory in AFC Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

Country's sleepy football got a Muktiyoddha boost yesterday when the Reds scored a 1-0 away victory over Nebetchi FC in their AFC Cup

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Prayer Timing		
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		

## Reform electoral system to make JS effective

Urge speakers at roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Dominance of non-politician businessmen in the Jatiya Sangsad, the speaker's bias and corrupt politics have made the parliament 'a non-functional institution in the country', speakers at a roundtable observed yesterday.

They said lawmakers who spend

crores on elections cannot just do away with crime and corruption overnight, as they want to recover the money spent on election and be on the side of the corrupt people who helped them to win ballots.

The roundtable observed that the opposition has no trust in the speaker and was critical of the opposition for staying off the house ignoring their

promise to address people's problems.

It recommended reforms to the electoral system to make way for career politicians to assume greater importance in national politics and framing of laws to force the speaker to run the House proceedings impartially. It also suggested measures to

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

## BNP faces BJP wrath

BJP leaders slate extremism, price hike, deaths in Rab custody

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP), a component of the BNP-led ruling alliance, yesterday blasted the government and the BNP high-ups for harbouring extremist elements and establishing an alternative

power centre at Hawa Bhaban.

Addressing an extended meeting of its central committee in the capital, the BJP leaders also came down heavily on the government for the price hike of essential commodities and deaths in the Rapid Action

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

### HABIGANJ BY-POLLS

## No contest for BNP candidate as others quit race

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Ruling BNP candidate for the Habiganj-3 by-polls Abu Lais Mohammad Mubin Chowdhury is set to win the election without any contest since all the other candidates have withdrawn their candidature.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2