

Morshed hits out at EU resolution

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan yesterday said Bangladesh is not a Banana Republic that needs people from the outside to teach it how to run or how to conduct its elections. "The people of Bangladesh, who fought long-drawn struggles for independence, democracy, fair elections and fundamental values, do not need any lessons from anybody...Our commitment to democracy and fair elections has already been tested and proved," he said

KIBRIA KILLING CASE Quaiyum wants to submit statement to court

Lawyers for expelled BNP leader Abdul Quaiyum, the prime accused in the former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria killing case, yesterday pleaded with a Habiganj court to submit a statement. Quaiyum is ready to submit his statement either in the open court or at the magistrate's chamber, the lawyers told the court. The First Class Magistrate's

CCC MAYOR ELECTIONS IOJ withdraws its candidate

With barely three weeks to Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) mayoral elections, Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ) leaders loyal to Moulana Fazlul Haq Amin MP backtracked on its position yesterday to withdraw their candidate from the May 9 polls. "We had an understanding at a meeting of the four party alliance in Dhaka on Friday and that's why we are hereby withdrawing our candidature from the mayoral race in favour of alliance candidate Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin," IOJ Member Secretary Moulana

WRIT AGAINST CJ HC decides today about admissibility

The High Court (HC) will pass an order today on the admissibility of a writ petition alleging breach of oath of office by Chief Justice Syed J R Mudassir Husain. A bench comprising justices Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman and Moinul Islam Chowdhury after hearing the petitioner observed that an order would be passed on Sunday after hearing the attorney general.

Musharraf in India for peace, prayer, cricket

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf yesterday arrived in India on a landmark visit, offering prayers for peace and progress between the nuclear rivals as New Delhi announced a set of seven confidence-building measures. Musharraf, accompanied by his wife Sheba and the foreign, commerce and information ministers, flew to Jaipur, capital of Rajasthan state, from Islamabad. From there he went to the holy city of Ajmer and offered prayers at the shrine of Sufi saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti. The military strongman offered a 'chadar' or a piece of cloth to lay over the tomb of the Sufi saint. The shrine authorities also presented him with

flowers and two 'chadars' to be handed over to two major Sufi shrines in Pakistan. After the visit to Ajmer Sharif, Musharraf, flanked by his wife and Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri and Information Minister Sheikh Rashid, told reporters he had prayed for peace between India and Pakistan and resolution of differences between them. He also said he had prayed for progress in the two neighbouring countries, adding that progress can be achieved only if there is peace between them. "I hope my prayers are accepted," Musharraf said. His visit to the shrine assumed significance as he could not make it during his last visit to India four years ago following the breakdown of his summit meeting with then Indian premier

Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Agra. The Pakistani president yesterday pointed out himself before his departure for India that the atmosphere between India and Pakistan is much different from the Agra summit as "it is conducive and friendly." India, for its part, has unveiled a set of new confidence-building measures, which proposes more bus links between the two countries, setting up points across the divided Kashmir where relatives on both sides of the Line of Control can meet and promotion of cross-border trade in the region. Other confidence-building steps include promotion of cross-border cultural interaction, joint promotion of tourism in Jammu and

Rescuers work at the building collapse site at Polashbari in Savar yesterday as relatives of the victims as well as the locals look on.



PHOTO: STAR

ACC Act challenged HC asks govt to explain some provisions

The High Court in a rule yesterday ordered Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) as well as the government to explain why the ACC Act sections that deal with the selection and appointment of ACC commissioners and the appointment of the ACC secretary should not be declared illegal. The High Court bench also asked them to explain on which legal grounds Justice Sultan Hossain Khan is holding the position of ACC chairman. Besides, the bench asked the government and the ACC to explain why an ACC notice served on a school headmaster in Chapainawabganj should not be

declared illegal. The court issued the rule following a writ petition filed last week by Supreme Court lawyer Advocate Saleem Ullah and Chapainawabganj-based school headmaster Torikul Islam. In the petition they challenged sections 7, 8, and 16 of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act (ACCA), 2004, appointment of Sultan as ACC chairman, and the ACC notice issued on the school-teacher. ACC chairman, two commissioners, cabinet secretary and home secretary are among the eight respondents of the rule, which asks them to reply within eight weeks. The petitioners said that section 7 of the ACCA violates the constitution as it provides for two judges--

one from the High Court division and the other from the Appellate division of the Supreme Court -- to be included in a five-member selection committee to choose ACC commissioners. The petitioners argued that if a judge spends even a minute in any other job he is in breach of the constitution [articles 94 (2), (3) and (4)] as well as the oath he has taken as a judge. The petitioners said that section 8 requires the commissioners to have 20 years of experience in certain disciplines, but it does not specify educational qualifications or age restrictions -- making it [section 8] vague. Besides, section 16, which deals with appointment of ACC secretary,

AHASANULLAH KILLING Hasina terms judgment incomplete

Leader of the Opposition in parliament Sheikh Hasina has termed the judgement in Ahsanullah Master murder case 'incomplete' and said the persons who 'conspired, planned and ordered' the killing of the Awami League (AL) lawmaker

Qatar keen on hiring more workers Emir tells president, heads home

Emir of Qatar Shaikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani yesterday said there is a great opportunity to recruit more workers from Bangladesh. The emir disclosed the employment prospects when he called on

SEPARATION OF JUDICIARY 20th extension gives govt six more months

Responding to the government's 20th plea for giving it four months 'extra time' to separate the judiciary from the executive, the Supreme Court (SC) yesterday gave it six months time. The government filed a petition in August last year after it failed to comply with the SC directive to separate the judiciary by July 19, 2004, which was the 19th extended deadline. The latest deadline expires on October 17 this year. The full bench of the SC Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed JR Mudassir Husain granted the government this additional time to implement the 12-point SC directive for separation of the judiciary. The SC issued the directive to the

government in 1999 to execute separation of the judiciary. In late last year, the SC asked the government to submit the draft rules and other documents related to the separation. When some of these were submitted, the court brought contempt charges against nine government officials, saying that they distorted the SC directives in the draft rules. The SC also reprimanded the government for killing time. Yesterday Attorney General Hassan Arif informed the court that on February 16, the law ministry had forwarded all related rules and documents to the president for his approval. Arif, however, said he is not aware of the developments after that.

Mujibnagar Day today

The historic Mujibnagar Day will be observed today commemorating the formation of Bangladesh's first government-in-exile at Baidyanathola mango grove in Meherpur on this day in 1971. The place was later renamed Mujibnagar in tribute to the country's independence hero Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who was declared president and supreme

BJP factions on expulsion spree

Expulsion and counter-expulsion are continuing between the two factions of the Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP). Party Chairman Nazir Rahman Manjur yesterday expelled Moidul Islam from the party. Moidul was additional secretary general of the BJP and is now acting secretary



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia speaks at a banquet in honour of the visiting Emir of Qatar Shaikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani at a city hotel on Friday.

Bombs seized from Shechhasebak League office

Three powerful bombs were seized from the district Shechhasebak League office yesterday afternoon where an Awami League (AL) leader was scheduled to hold a meeting later in the evening. Police searched the office and found three bombs hidden in a bag. They arrested two persons--Sujan and Mehedi--from the spot. Police said the bombs smuggled from across the border are highly powerful. Former AL lawmaker Abdul Mannan was scheduled to address the party workers at the office on the eve of Mujibnagar Day.

FAIZEE'S ATTENDING BENCH PROTESTED Lawyers scuffle in courtroom

Two groups of lawyers yesterday engaged in a scuffle at the Supreme Court over Additional Judge Faisal Mahmud Faizee's attending the High Court bench. The 15-minute brawl started at 10.40am in the courtroom in presence of judge Faizee. The two

Final Indo-Pak one-dayer today

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq is confident the spirit shown by his players on the India tour would lead to a series victory following the sixth and final one-dayer on Sunday. Pakistan arrived on their first Test tour of India for six years after a 3-0 Test series rout in Australia and without injured strike bowler Shoaib Akhtar. The visitors, however, have silenced the critics by rallying to draw the three-Test series 1-1 and then coming back from 0-2 down to lead 3-2 going into the final one-dayer in Delhi.

Govt gets ready to fight new deadly diseases

Newly emerging diseases like dengue and nipah first broke out in 1999. The country presently lacks proper facilities to detect such viral attacks, but the new move would enable the existing public health laboratories to gather firsthand information on them. The first-ever such drive aims at identifying the country's disease patterns, location, mode of transmission and population at risk, and to combat the diseases using modern technology with technical help from World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases and Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B), a senior official at the health ministry said. Under the priority disease surveillance strategy, the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) will study and

Prayer Timing		
April 17		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-35	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-24	6-28
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation