

**Intra-party feud led to Nasir's defeat: PM Jamaat sheds off its responsibility**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said that feud among the party leaders accounted for the defeat of ruling alliance's candidate in Chittagong mayoral polls.

Jamaat-e-Islami, a key component of the ruling alliance, meanwhile in its parliamentary party meeting echoed the prime minister's view, and rebutted the allegation that Jamaat was responsible for the polls debacle.

The prime minister's observations about the causes of the four-party alliance's failure in the Chittagong City Corporation polls came at a meeting of the BNP parliamentary party yesterday. "We

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

# PM blows hot over MPs dodging JS

## Warns of House dissolution, early polls if the trend continues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Exasperated at her party lawmakers' persistent absenteeism in parliamentary sessions, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday warned them of dissolution of the House and early polls if they do not attend it regularly and behave politically.

At a BNP parliamentary party meeting hours before the start of the 16th Jatiya Sangsad session yesterday,

the prime minister reacted sharply at her party lawmakers' irregular and poor participation that made the House suffer severe quorum crises in the past, a number of senior BNP lawmakers said.

"If you don't attend the House regularly and do your duties properly, I will be compelled to dissolve the Jatiya Sangsad and hand over power to a caretaker government for an early general election," the leader

of the House told the meeting at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

She directed the deputies of her party to attach the highest priority to participation in parliamentary proceedings over all other businesses. "As lawmakers, your first and foremost duty is to participate in parliamentary proceedings."

She rebuked the MPs for sloth and said while in Dhaka they should

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

**DUTY-FREE ACCESS**  
 Washington to support Dhaka

Rocca tells Khaleda  
 UNB, Dhaka

The United States will lend support to Dhaka's bid for duty-free access of its goods including the RMG (ready-made garments) to the US market.

Visiting US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christina Rocca gave the assurance when she met Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday.

Rocca suggested keeping up Dhaka's efforts to this end and appreciated its success achieved in different sectors.

She lauded the peaceful transfer of power in consecutive elections, the country's efforts in improving law and order and curbing crime and its role in UN peacekeeping missions.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 6



US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Christina Rocca shakes hands with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia when she calls on the latter at her office in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

**AL wants elections right now**

Rocca told at meeting with Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

As visiting US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christina Rocca met opposition leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday, Awami League (AL) leaders told her they want an immediate election as the present government has "completely failed" to run the country.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

# Rocca concerned over Ahmadiyya incidents, extra-judicial killings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Christina Rocca yesterday expressed concerns at the Ahmadiyya incidents and extra-judicial killings by the law-enforcers in Bangladesh.

She asked Dhaka to hunt down those who would undermine its long tradition of nurturing tolerance, moderation and peace, and hoped that Bangladesh would establish democratic rights and ensure justice for the people.

"We are concerned about the

Ahmadiyya issue, but we know Bangladesh has a long history of (religious) harmony and tolerance. We hope that this harmony and tolerance would continue in this country. Bangladesh is known as a voice of moderation in the world

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

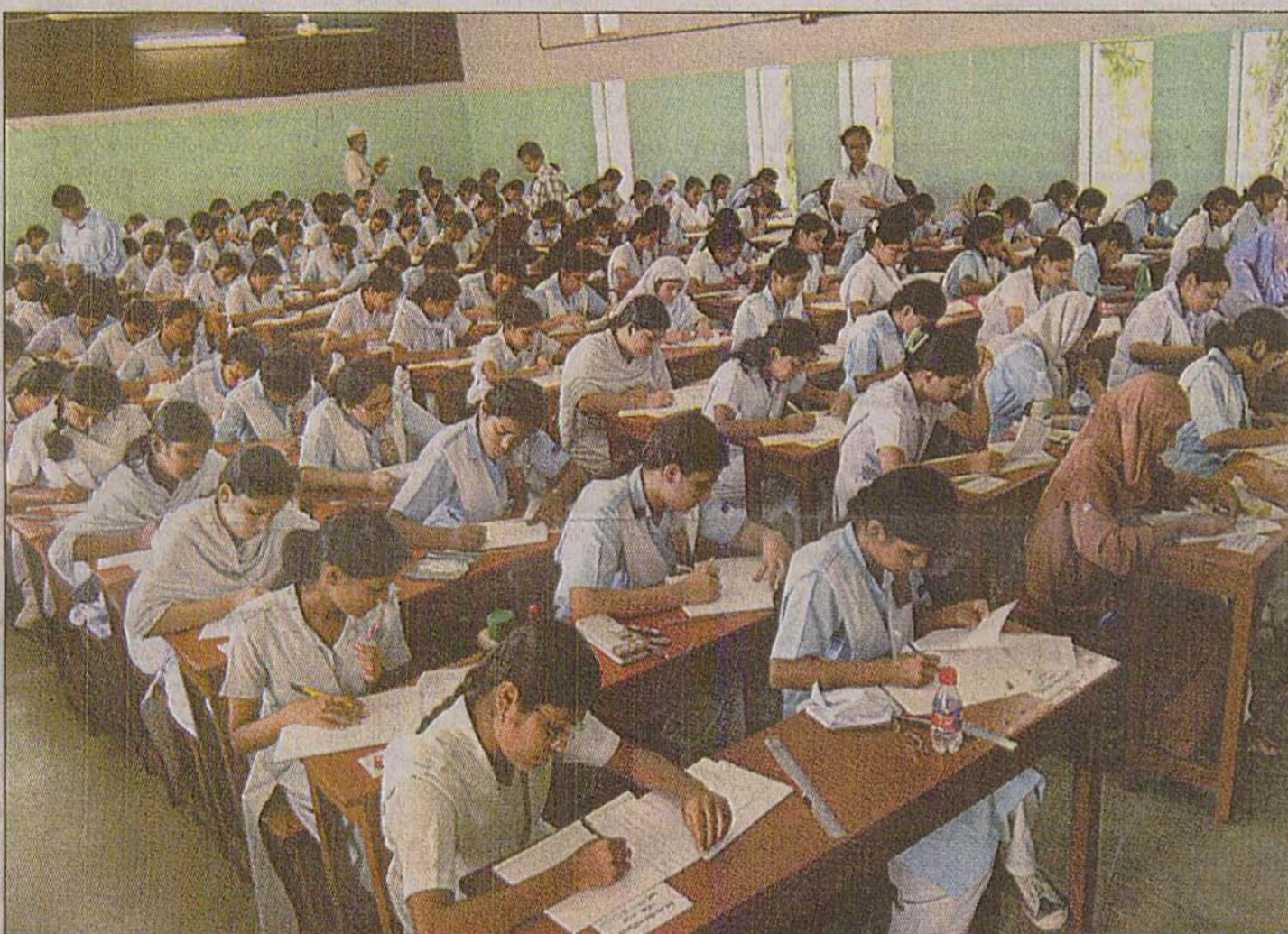


PHOTO: STAR

Students at Notre Dame College in the city sit the Higher Secondary School Certificate exams that began across the country yesterday.

**US religion panel puts Dhaka on 'watch list'**

Wants Pakistan blacklisted

AFP, Washington

A US Congress-mandated commission yesterday sought the inclusion of Pakistan on a blacklist of alleged religious freedom violating nations and challenged the government to impose sanctions on Saudi Arabia for religious intolerance.

The US Commission on International Religious Freedom said it had written to Secretary of

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

**MILITIA AMBUSH**

# 6 Bangladeshi peacekeepers wounded in Congo

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six United Nations (UN) peacekeepers from Bangladesh were wounded, three of them bullet-hit, when militias ambushed their motorcade in the Democratic Republic of Congo yesterday, Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said last night.

The condition of two of the injured was stated to be critical. But

the identity of the Bangladeshi peacekeepers could not immediately be known.

This was the second attack against UN peacekeepers from Bangladesh, following an ambush on February 25 that left nine Bangladeshis dead, the highest casualty of Bangladeshi soldiers in any UN peacekeeping mission.

Three peacekeepers sustained bullet injuries when rebel militias

ambushed a mechanised patrol party in the Geti area, some 50 kilometres off Bunia town of Ituri region at about 6:15pm Bangladesh time.

Three other Bangladeshi soldiers were injured when a vehicle carrying the peacekeepers fell into a ditch during the attack, as the driver lost control over the vehicle, said an ISPR release last night.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

**CARETAKER GOVT REFORMS**

# AL ready to talk with govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) will sit down with government if the latter agrees to discuss the demand for bringing reforms in the caretaker government system and the Election Commission (EC).

"We are even ready to join parliament to endorse the reforms in case those need constitutional amend-

ments," Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil said yesterday.

"Everything however depends on the government's attitude towards the opposition's demand. We will go to parliament to place the reforms for endorsement if the discussion outside parliament produces results, and the government assures us that it would meet the demand."

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

# ACC against money whitening measures in budget

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) will ask the government not to keep any provisions in the upcoming national budget for whitening black money, as the commission believes such provisions benefit corrupt people.

The ACC will write to Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman in this regard, commission sources said yesterday after a meeting that took the decision.

"ACC believes there is huge black money in the country. The opportunities offered by the government to

whiten this money are encouraging corruption and discouraging genuine taxpayers," an ACC official said.

He said ACC's anticorruption drive would not succeed if the government continues to offer such opportunities that also contradict the law of the land.

By giving the corrupt people an opportunity to claim themselves to be clean, the government is actually violating the Anti-Corruption Commission Act that empowers the commission to take action against them, he observed.

The government's tax system in

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

## Introducing Moina Go...

**Habib's 3rd hit album, a Banglalink exclusive!**  
**Featuring Habib's voice for the very first time!!**

**Available FREE only with Banglalink Pre-Paid (M2M & Standard) connections.**

Select your favorite track, write MG [track no] and send SMS\* to 500. Gift Hampers await first 10 SMS senders everyday and 5 top SMS senders for the most popular track.

M2M connection Tk. 200 - including Tk. 20 talk time (inclusive of VAT)  
 Standard connection Tk. 1,499 - including Tk. 320 talk time (inclusive of VAT)  
 Buy from authorized dealers only  
 \* Normal SMS rates apply

A Banglalink Exclusive