

Don't vote for those who don't go to Sangsad

PM tells rally

UNB, Kapasia, Gazipur

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday urged people to elect their representatives who have worked and will work for them in future, discarding those who don't go to the parliament.

"What is the benefit of electing someone who does not go to the parliament," she questioned while addressing a public meeting at Kapasia Pilot High School ground in the afternoon.

Khaleda, who visited Kapasia to inaugurate Fakir Majnu Shah Bridge

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Benapole port strike enters 14th day

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

The indefinite strike enforced by the five organisations of port users, including the Clearing and Forwarding (C&F) Agents' Association, continued for the 14th consecutive day yesterday, paralysing export-import activities at the Benapole land port and incurring a revenue loss of about Tk 56 crore.

Sources in the C&F Agents' Association at Benapole said a rally of the five port users' associations was held in front of the Customs House yesterday. A protest

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Madrasas mushroom with state favour

22.22pc growth of madrasas against 9.74pc of general educational institutions during 2001-05

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and SHAMEEM MAHMUD

Madrasa education has received more state favour than general education in the last four years, leading to the significant growth of madrasas in Bangladesh.

The number of general educational institutions, which receive government funds, has increased 9.74 percent against a 22.22 percent growth of madrasas from 2001 to 2005, Bangladesh Economic Review statistics show.

The growth of madrasas got such a boost especially after the BNP-led coalition involving Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Oikya Jote and Bangladesh Jatiya Party came to power in 2001.

The picture was different during the 1996-2001 rule of Awami League (AL). In the first four years of the AL rule, the number of general educational institutions rose by 28 percent

while that of madrasas by 17 percent.

The number of madrasa teachers saw a significant rise in the last four years, compared to those in the general education. Teachers in the schools and colleges marked a 12.27 percent increase against 16.52 percent in the madrasas between 2001 and 2005.

The number of students in general educational institutions rose 8.64 percent while the madrasas saw a 10.12 percent rise in enrolment during this period. But the number of students increased sharply during the AL period.

Experts believe madrasas have negligible contributions in creating skilled human resources in the country, still they received on average 11.5 percent of the total education budget in the last few years.

Apart from about 9,000 government-registered madrasas, there

are numerous other institutions across the country offering religious education without registration.

The national databank on education compiled by Bangladesh Bureau of Education Information and Statistics (BANBEIS) does not have information about these madrasas.

Madrasa Education Board controls the Ebtedayee madrasas, but Qawmi madrasas are totally out of government control, said Professor Iqbal Aziz Muttaki of the Institute of Education and Research at Dhaka University.

The Qawmi madrasas have their own curriculum. Abdul Jabbar, secretary general of Bangladesh Qawmi Madrasa Education Board, a private board of these madrasas,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Security, trade to rule talks with Natwar

REZAUL KARIM

Security, bilateral trade, border management, water sharing, and UN reform issues will top the agenda during Indian External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh's three-day official visit to Dhaka on August 6-8.

Bangladesh wants to discuss all bilateral issues with India with an open mind while India has also a broad-based agenda with Bangladesh, official sources said.

This will be the first ministerial-level visit from India since the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government assumed office in May, 2004.

In addition, there will be an exchange of views on international

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

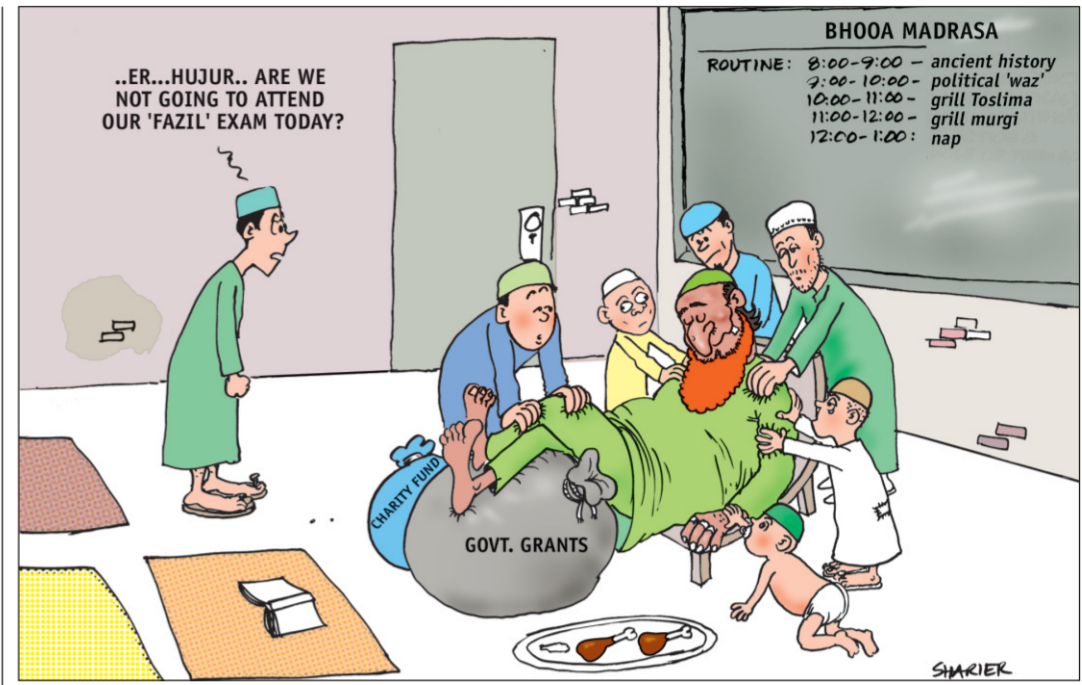
India yet to hand over bodies of 4 Bangladeshis

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

Indian authorities did not send back the bodies of four lynched Bangladeshi citizens as of yesterday evening, while the incident has raised tension among people on the nearby border areas.

After Indian people beat to death the four Bangladeshi citizens at Gazna village in West Bengal early

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



Food strike hurts poor ones most

Hygiene drive continues undaunted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the public, including office goers, students, rickshaw pullers and cab drivers, suffered through the first day of a two-day strike called by food producers, since they were unable to take food

from restaurants.

The mobile courts continued raiding different shops and food producing factories in the city yesterday amid a strike by food producers in the city.

Bangladesh Khadya Babsayi

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

JCD leader Idul gets death

Speedy tribunals hand hang order to 13 others

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader Idul and two of his accomplices were sentenced to death in a murder case yesterday.

JCD leader Abdullahel Baqui alias Idul was also jailed for 20 years in an arms case on March 17, though he was named Shahidul Islam Idul in that case.

The Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 and the Speedy Trial Tribunal, Rajshahi also handed down death sentences

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

	GROWTH: MADRASAS VS GENERAL EDUCATIONAL I	
	1996-2000	2001-2005
Institutions	General 28%, Madrasa 17%	General 10%, Madrasa 22%
Teachers	General 16%, Madrasa 13%	General 12%, Madrasa 17%
Students	General 33%, Madrasa 58%	General 9%, Madrasa 10%

Source: Bangladesh Economic Review

STAR GRAPHICS



CHEQUE DISHONOUR
Arrest warrant issued against Bidisha

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued a warrant of arrest against Bidisha after her former husband HM Ershad's personal assistant filed a case following rejection of a Tk 2.13 crore cheque she owed.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Mizanur Rahman passed the order after HM Golam Reza filed the case with the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka.

Bidisha, who was released on bail on June 27 in four cases filed by Ershad and police, now has five cases against her.

In the complaint, Reza said Bidisha took Tk 2.13 crore from him for business purposes on different dates.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

LIFE AFTER BLASTS

INAM AHMED, BACK FROM LONDON

At 9:47am, time stops

Time stops at 9:47am for 24 Juliette Road.

The mobile phone rang exactly at that precise moment. A call from Shahara to her uncle's mobile. That is also the exact time that Shahara Islam was blown to pieces on a double-decker near Russell Square close to King's Cross station on July 7.

At her Juliette Road terrace residence, the flowers, dried and brown, still lie beside the door in a heap. The quiet neighbourhood seems to be still mourning the face of London.

A single knock and the door opens. Shahara's father Shafiqul Islam stands there with a mug of tea



Shahara Islam

in his hand, draped in a lungi and a dark violet shirt. For a father of a 20-year, Shafiqul looks too young, hardly in his 40s, and very handsome. Clean shaved at this hour.

"Salamalaikum. Come in," he says sombrely and steps aside.

The wooden floor of the drawing room feels cold on bare foot. There is something hollow about the room, with crème walls and barely anything on them. Two crème-colour sofas on two sides, two plants in crème tubs, two large pictures -- one of two white roses and the other of a mild yellow tulip -- on two walls, and a big mirror framed in gold.

And yes, a large television. BBC News 24 is running and they are

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

RICE PRICE SPIRAL
Open sale from next month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Against the backdrop of spiraling prices of rice in the market, the government yesterday decided to start open market sale (OMS) of rice and vulnerable group feeding (VGF) for the extreme poor throughout the country from next month.

An inter-ministerial meeting at the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management that took the decision yesterday reviewed the overall food situation in the country and progress in government's food procurement drive.

Presided over by the Minister for Food and Disaster Management Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, the meeting was attended, among others, by Agriculture minister MK Anwar, State Minister for Finance Anwarul Kabir Talukder and Deputy Minister for Food and Disaster

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2