



PHOTO: STAR

Slum children take bath in water accumulated on a road near Tejgaon Truck Stand in the city yesterday. The water leaked out from a Wasa pipe damaged during the repair work of the road.

## Hasina goes to Tungipara tomorrow

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina goes to Tungipara tomorrow as part of her three-day tour in the south-western region of the country.

During her tour, Hasina, also leader of the opposition in Parliament, will address the divisional grand rally of 14-party alliance in Khulna on Friday.

She will also perform ziarat at the mazar of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and place wreath.

She will return to the capital on Saturday.

## HC stays death sentence to minor convict for rape, murder

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday stayed the execution of death sentence to a convict for three months and accepted to hear a writ petition challenging the act under which the 16-year-old boy was awarded capital punishment in a rape and murder case four years ago.

The court also issued a rule upon the government to show cause as to why the provision of the concerned law under which the case was filed and trial was done should not be declared unconstitutional and without lawful authority.

The HC rule came after hearing of a writ petition filed by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (Blast)

and Sukur Ali of Manikganj who was accused in the case when he was 14 years old. The rule is returnable in eight weeks.

Secretaries of the ministries of law, justice and parliamentary affairs and home affairs, inspector general of police (IGP), the jailer of Dhaka Central Jail and deputy commissioner of Manikganj are the respondents.

In 1999, the rape and murder case was filed against Sukur Ali, son of Hashem Mondal, Shibrampur Tepra village in Shibalaya in Manikganj district, under Women and Children Repression Prevention (Special) Act, 1995.

The Women and Children Repression Prevention Special Tribunal of Manikganj, on July 12, 2001, awarded capital punishment to Sukur Ali, now in Dhaka jail.

After hearing the appeal of the case, the High Court on February 25, 2004 upheld the judgment of the trial court and the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court on February 23 this year also upheld the High Court verdict.

The Blast and Sukur Ali filed the writ petition in the High Court challenging the constitutional validity of section 6(2) of Women and Children Repression Prevention (Special) Act, 1995, carrying the provision of awarding death sentence to the

convicts for killing any woman or child after rape.

The petition says the Women and Children Repression Prevention (Special) Act, 1995 has been replaced by Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 2000, with a provision of life-term imprisonment and capital punishment as an alternative.

The petitioners also said section 6(2) of Women and Children Repression Prevention (Special) Act, 1995 is ultra vires to the constitutional guarantees.

Advocate MI Farooqui assisted by advocate Ruhul Quddus and advocate Abdul Mannan Khan moved for the petitioners while Additional Attorney General Fida M Kamal and Assistant Attorney General Razik-al Jalil for the government.

## Former MP Ziauddin dies in China

UNB, Dhaka

Former MP and eminent industrialist AKM Ziauddin, who was in China on a business tour, passed away due to cardiac arrest at a hotel on Monday.

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan, now in Jeddah, expressed deep sorrow at the death of Ziauddin, Advisor of Pacific Bangladesh Telecom Lt (CityCell).

In a condolence message, Morshed Khan termed Ziauddin as 'strong political leader' and recalled his contribution to the country's industrial sector.

He prayed for salvation of the departed soul and conveyed his sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

## Jamaat blamed for all bomb blasts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami has established a reign of terror in the name of establishing Islam in the country, said the leaders of Awami Ulema League (AUL), a religious wing of the main opposition Awami League, yesterday.

Blaming the Jamaat, a coalition partner of the 4-party alliance, for all bomb blasts across the country, they said the government is patronising the Jamaat for carrying out the brutal killings.

The AUL leaders were addressing a press conference titled 'Terrorism and militancy have no place in Islam' at Dhaka Reporter's Unity (DRU) auditorium.

They said Jamaat, an anti-liberation force, is conducting the bomb blasts in the name of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and Harkatul Jihad.

AUL President Moulana Mohammad Ismail Hossain said without ousting the Jamaati ministers, who have direct link to militancy, from the cabinet, it is not possible to take any stern measures against the militants.

He said Jamaat had killed lakhs of people during the liberation war and now they are killing innocent people in a bid to push the country towards anarchy.

Speaking as a chief guest Moulana Mohammad Shamsul Haque, chairman of Bangladesh Mufti Board, said Islam is a religion of peace and it does not support any kinds of violence.

Quoting from the holy Quran, he said if a Muslim kills another then hell would be his permanent address. Islam cannot be established by killing people, he added.

He said, "It is high time to find out the mastermind of the militancy and punish them so that they cannot raise their heads again."

Moulana Abdul Majid Azadi, Moulana SHM Arif Billah, Moulana Rafiqul Islami Dhali, and Moulana Mominur Rahman also spoke at the conference.

Earlier, leaders of another group of Ulema League obstructed them to hold the press conference saying that Ismail Hossain, an extortionist, is trying to tarnish the image of the Awami League (AL) by using the name of Ulema League.

The group also asked Ismail if he has any permission from AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil to hold the conference.

Ismail Hossain, however denied the allegation.

## Indian Speaker likely to visit Dhaka in Jan

UNB, Dhaka

Indian Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee is likely to visit Dhaka next month at the invitation of Speaker Barrister Zamiruddin Sircar.

Sircar earlier invited Chatterjee on his election as Speaker of the Indian Parliament.

Indian Deputy High Commissioner S Chakraborty yesterday met Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui at his parliament office and conveyed the acceptance of the invitation.

During the meeting, the Deputy Speaker felt the need for further strengthening the bilateral relations. "Exchange of parliamentary delegations between the two countries could help parliamentarians know the parliamentary norms and practices," he said.

## Join dialogue to eradicate militancy

### Bhuiyan urges opposition parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General and LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday urged the opposition parties to sit in a dialogue with a view to establishing democracy, holding free and fair elections and eradicating militancy.

He said the government is determined to net the militants whether the opposition cooperates or not.

He was speaking at a rally organised by City BNP at Mukhtangon.

Bhuiyan said the BNP will hand over power only after completion of its tenure and will not resign being scared of the 14-party threat.

AL wants to create anarchy in the country not peaceful elections, he said. "They say bomb blasts will stop if the government resigns, are they involved in the bomb blasts?" Bhuiyan asked.

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed said a section of misled people are engaged in creating instability in the society by exploding bombs on the established courts. People know who are instigating these people, but their conspiracy will not be successful, he said.

Environment Minister Tariqul Islam said those who want to establish Allah's law through extremism are the enemies



PHOTO: STAR

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan speaks at a rally at Mukhtangan in the city yesterday.

of the democracy. Instead of joining the concerted efforts of facing the militants, AL is doing politics with the bombers, he said.

Party standing committee member Khandakar Mahub Ahmed, Housing Minister Mirza Abbas, State Minister for Cultural Affairs Selima Rahman,

State Minister for Labour Amanullah Aman and Commerce Ministry Advisor Barkatullah Bhulu were present at the meeting.

City BNP President Sadeque Hossain Khoka presided over the meeting.



PHOTO: STAR

Vehicles remain stuck at the Dainik Bangla crossing as pro-government political parties hold rallies at different points in the city yesterday.