



TO People's Right to Know

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XVI NO. 20

DHAKA THURSDAY FEBRUARY 2, 2006

MAGH 20, 1412 BS

MOHARRAM 2, 1427 HIJRI

16 PAGES PLUS RISING STARS PRICE: Tk 10.00

www.thedailystar.net

150 hurt as cops fire on mob demanding Pir's expulsion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

At least 150 people were injured as police opened fire and lobbed tear gas shells on agitators demanding expulsion of a Pir from Sunamganj on Tuesday night.

Locals said the 'controversial' Pir [a cult leader], Maolana Dillur Rahman, along with 300 companions on January 30 checked into

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

VOTER LISTING EC pleads to SC against HC's observations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) yesterday filed an appeal in the Supreme Court (SC) against the High Court (HC) observation over preparing 'controversial' fresh voter list for the upcoming general elections.

The hearing of the appeal will be held today.

The move came a day after the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

If explosives came across border govt to take up issue with that country

PM tells JS

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday told parliament that the government would take up the matter through appropriate channel if the explosives came from a neighbouring country for the recent bombings in Bangladesh.

"We're examining the recovered explosives to see from where and how those came... We have seen some of those came from a neighbouring country; we've seen it in the newspapers as well. If the explosives come from a neighbouring country, we will discuss it through appropriate agency," she said.

The prime minister made the statement in response to a supplementary question of Moazzem Hossain Alal of the ruling BNP during the prime minister's question hour in the House.

Alal wanted to know whether the government would take any diplomatic initiative since some recovered explosive materials bear the seal of a neighbouring country.

Answering another supplementary question from Shamsul Alam Pramanik (BNP), Khaleda said the government has been making all-out efforts to arrest JMB chief Shaikh Abdur Rahman and his patrons, no matter whoever they are and whatever position they hold.

"We'll take action under the law of the land against terrorists, whoever, and whatever party they belong to. We've already cleared our position against them," the prime minister said.

She assured the lawmakers that those who are patronising Shaikh Abdur Rahman would be caught disregarding their position and party.

Earlier, in reply to a question raised in the name of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the prime minister said sudden unrest erupted in the country following the activities by a misguided quarter using religious garbs.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Ashuganj-Manohardi gas pipeline trips on failure to cross Meghna

SHARIEF KHAN

The fate of the under-construction 37km Ashuganj-Manohardi gas pipeline, which is critical to improving the country's gas supply, has become uncertain due to a Chinese contractor's inefficiency in laying pipeline across the Meghna.

China Petroleum Technology and Development Corporation (CPTDC), a contractor for Canadian Niko Resources, recently abandoned a 1km pipeline of 30-inch diameter in the river. Now it is trying to find an alternative installation site to finish the job at its own cost, competent sources said.

If it cannot finish the job by April, the pipeline project may take another year and an inflated budget to complete. This also means an

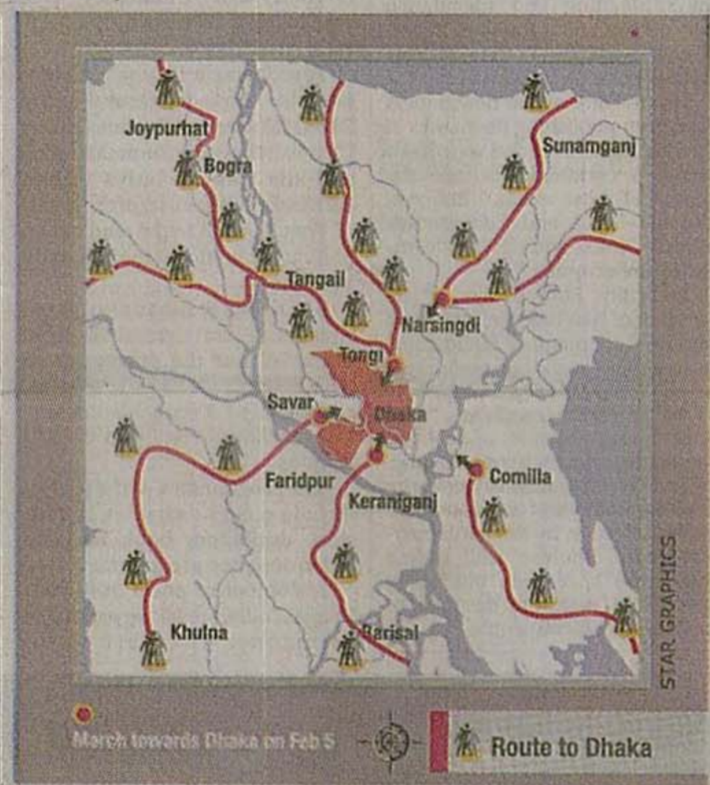
inevitable and serious gas supply crisis this year, the sources said.

"The chances are that the project will be delayed. Because the contractor will have to procure the pipes from the international market first and then lay the pipeline," said a source, adding, "In the first place, crossing the Meghna is a very difficult task and we should have hired a more competent contractor."

Such a pipeline cannot be installed after April, as the water level will start to rise and the current in the river will become increasingly difficult to face. The best time for such a job is the winter.

On the other hand, another contractor is expected to complete laying the 35km pipeline over land by April. But, if the section of the pipeline across the river is not laid,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



JUDICIARY SEPARATION SC rejects govt's plea for more time

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday turned down again the government petition seeking another four months for the implementation of the 12-point SC directives on separating the judiciary from the executive.

Expressing resentment over the state side's repeated plea for time-extension, the court asked it not to put the court into an embarrassing situation by seeking time for no reason.

This was for the 22nd time that the government sought time-extension.

The full Appellate Division bench led by Chief Justice Syed JR

Mudassir Hossain also fixed February 22 for hearing of a contempt-of-court petition against the government for its failure to implement the court directives for the separation of the judiciary despite time extension several times.

As Barrister Amir-Ul Islam, counsel for the judiciary-separation case, moved the contempt petition, the court pointed out that the bureaucrats against whom the contempt-of-court charge is to be drawn were transferred from their posts.

The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), meantime, demanded the chief justice to draw a contempt charge against the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

TIPAIMUKH HYDEL Delhi floats tender as Dhaka fears fallout

REAZ AHMAD

India has finally floated international tender for construction of the much-talked-about 1,500 megawatt Tipaimukh Hydro Electric (multipurpose) Project at the confluence of the Barak and Tuivai rivers in its eastern state of Manipur amidst heightened fears in the lower riparian Bangladesh about its impact on water flow to the Meghna river system.

The Barak feeds the Surma and Kushiara in Sylhet that flow into the Meghna, one of the three major rivers in Bangladesh.

India had earlier promised to provide Bangladesh with the detailed project report (DPR) of Tipaimukh before going for its

implementation to dispel the lower riparian neighbour's concern about possible diversion of water from the Barak.

It made the pledge at the last Indo-Bangla Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) meeting held in Dhaka in September last year.

But the North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Ltd (NEEPCO), a public sector enterprise under the Indian ministry of power, has meanwhile completed the DPR and started sale of tender papers yesterday for construction of the Rs 6,351 crore Tipaimukh project in 78 months.

According to the NEEPCO's bid announcement, the last date for sale of tender documents is

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Ekushey Book Fair begins

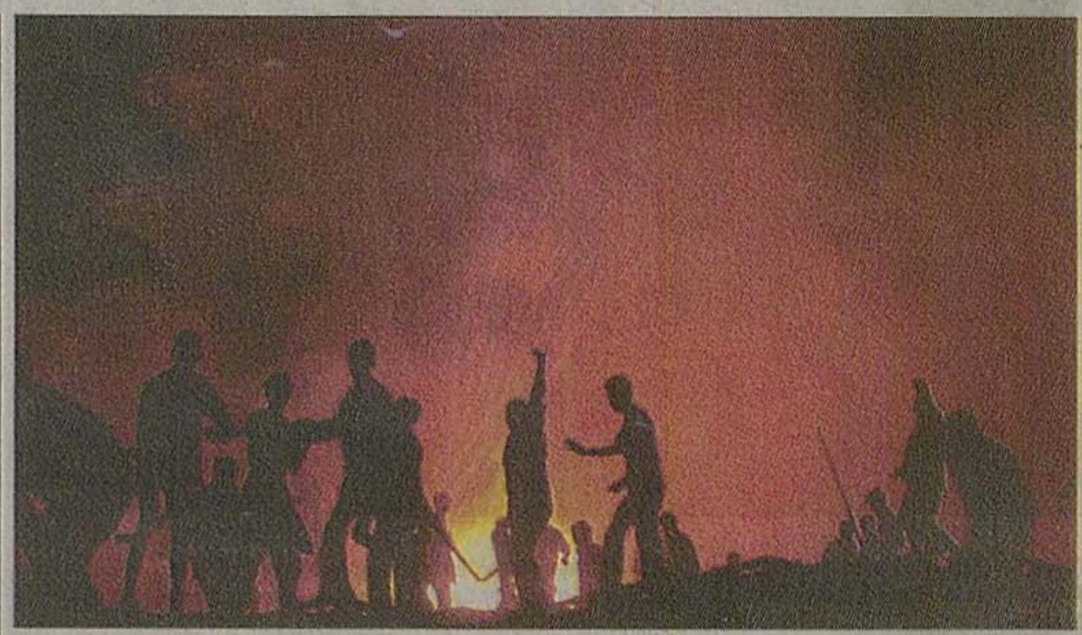
SURANJITH DEABNATH

The month-long Amar Ekushey Book Fair began yesterday on the Bangla Academy premises with a special offer of 30 percent commission for all books, seemingly a special attraction for the book-worms.

The fair commemorating the supreme sacrifice of Bangladeshis during the Language Movement on February 21, 1952 also serves as the meeting ground of country's eminent novel and short story writers, poets, literary critics, historians, columnists, journalists and readers and cultural activists.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia inaugurated the fair, one of the most traditional events, that is very close to the heart of the people of

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8



Firemen struggle amid darkness to douse a fire at Rayerbazar that burnt down hundreds of houses yesterday.

You want your nature clean we help you keep it green

We bring you InstaBuys @ 0% for CNG Conversion.

At Standard Chartered, we believe bigger changes can come with little efforts. In our little effort to make our environment more liveable, Standard Chartered Credit Card brings you InstaBuys at 0% interest for converting your car into CNG.

Remember, by using CNG as fuel in your car, you not only contribute towards a healthier environment, you can also save* upto 75% on your regular fuel cost. As partners in this campaign, we have brought together the two biggest names in our CNG Conversion industry, Navana & Rahimafrooz. For details, please visit any of our branches or contact our 24-hour Call Centre at 8961151, 0173 041400-19.

Standard Chartered

NAVANA CNG

RAHIMAFROOZ CNG

your intelligent choice

I Credit Cards I

14-party 'long march' begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL)-led 14-party opposition alliance begins marches from different parts of the country towards Dhaka today for their February 5 mass gathering at Paltan Maidan in the capital demanding resignation of the government.

The processions will begin from four points today and nine other places tomorrow.

The 13 processions by buses and trucks will join in six separate marches and enter the city through Jatrabari, Tongi, Keraniganj, and Savar.

Opposition leaders will address the February 5 gathering at Paltan Maidan, from where they will announce their next agitation programmes.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Itineraries of PM's Pakistan, India visits being drawn

REZAU KARIM

Officials of the foreign ministry and two Bangladesh missions are arranging the itineraries of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia of her two high-profile visits to Pakistan and India in February and March.

Arrangements of the visits are at the final stage, but the ministry is not likely to confirm the dates or release the itineraries for a while, a high official of the foreign ministry told The Daily Star yesterday.

The prime minister will hold talks on bilateral issues and global concerns with her Pakistani and Indian counterparts Shaukat Aziz and Manmohan Singh, the official added.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Bangladesh International
International banking for international Bangladeshis

Bangladeshis are flying the country's flag throughout the world. With HSBC's Bangladesh International service, Non-Resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) need never be far from home.

Bangladesh International is a unique service from HSBC that offers NRBs a host of reliable products and services linked to the strength of our global network.

N etwork	R eliability	B enefits
• 9,700 offices in 77 countries.	• Dedicated relationship team in Bangladesh.	• A host of tailored products.
• Offices in Dhaka, Chittagong and, soon, Sylhet.	• One bank, both at home and overseas.	• Efficient money transfers.
		• Global access ATM card.

With our extensive network in the UK, USA, Canada, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia and many other countries, HSBC is the bank of choice for NRBs, wherever they may be.

For more information:
Call : 011 88HSBC (4722)
9143423, 9143427, 9143429
Website : www.hsbc.com.bd
E-mail : smalik@hsbc.com.bd

HSBC
The world's local bank

*Terms and conditions apply

Issued by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited