

## Boy burned to death as mother cries for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A boy was burned to death in a fire at a house in Kaful in the capital yesterday.

The mother, Helena Begum, cried and begged neighbours to rescue her child Hridoy, two and a half year old child, but all went in vein as they were busy removing their own belongings.

Fire fighters later recovered the charred body of Hridoy, son of a garment-worker Lal Miah, under the bed after dousing the fire.

The fire originated from a roadside gas-pipeline leakage at Baisheki area yesterday morning, said the locals and firefighters. The fire burned 40 shanties.

Witnesses said the fire took only a couple of minutes to reach the shanties, and the tenants tried their best to recover their belongings from the grasp of the raging fire.

"I rescued my children out of the shanty and recovered some belongings from the room," said Helena, mother of two boys. She

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

# 1,500 patients suffer for Ctg interns' strike

*They threaten to stop emergency service if demands not met in 2 days*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

About 1,500 patients committed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) are suffering the most as the interns went on an indefinite strike yesterday demanding an allowance hike.

The interns at a rally also issued a two-day ultimatum and threatened to paralyse the hospital's outdoor and emergency departments if their demand was not met by April 7.

Intern Doctors Association (IDA), CMCH, enforced the strike demanding increased payment as per a declaration made by the prime minister on January 1 this year.

The association leaders said as per the prime minister's declaration, interns at different government hospitals are getting increased allowance of Tk 6,500 each with effect from July 1, 2005.

However, 287 interns at all 34 CMCH wards are yet to get the increased allowance and receiving the previous amount of Tk 5,500 each.

A large number of patients were denied pre-scheduled admissions yesterday and forced to leave the hospital without receiving treatment.

The strike forced on duty doctors, assistant registrars and senior medical officers remain busy in giving new admission, primary treatments and taking care of the

admitted patients.

Dr Yunus Harun, assistant registrar of the surgery ward, told The Daily Star they are engaged in dressing, making list of medicines and keeping records of the patients' follow-ups when the critical patients badly need their service.

He said only five patients could be admitted to his ward until 12:00pm, while the number on a regular day raises over 50 by this time.

"We also had to cancel two major operations since the morning due to shortage of adequate hands in the ward," Dr Yunus added.

The patients of different wards came up with several complaints as

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

## Rice defends nuclear deal with India

AP, Washington

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called on Congress yesterday to approve an unprecedented US plan to share nuclear technology with India, saying the deal will not trigger an arms race in Asia.

Her testimony was received cautiously. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar agreed that India under the deal would submit to more international safeguards.

But the senator, an Indiana Republican with a strong interest in arms control, said the agreement "would not prevent India from expanding its nuclear arsenal."

And Sen. Joseph Biden (news, bio, voting record), D-Del., said "it comes down to a simple bet we are making, that India appreciates as much as we that the two nations have the potential to be anchors for stability."

Biden, the senior Democrat on the committee, said he would probably vote for the accord.

And, taking a tough line, Sen.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



Hindu devotees led by a priest pray in the river Old Brahmaputra at Langalbandh in Narayanganj yesterday. Pilgrims from home and abroad gather at the place every year for the holy dip.

## Road closed two days into inauguration

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

Traffic movement on the newly constructed Sylhet Airport Bypass has been suspended due to severe damage two days after its inauguration by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman on April 1.

The Roads & Highways Department has constructed the three-kilometre road at a cost of Tk 14 crore on the eastern side of Sylhet Osmani International Airport.

Earlier, another bypass road has been constructed on the western side of the airport's runway. But the road was scheduled to be abandoned due to the airport's runway expansion project.

Besides, the old bypass (Sylhet-Salatikor-Companiganj Road) running

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



A girl plays in the pothole on the newly constructed Sylhet bypass yesterday. The road has been closed since April 3 as trucks got stuck on the dented road creating a severe congestion for about 10 hours.

## BCL council elects young leaders

Ripon new president, Roton GS



Mahmud Hasan Ripon



Mahfuzul Haider Roton

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mahmud Hasan Ripon and Mahfuzul Haider Roton were elected new president and general secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of main opposition in the parliament Awami League (AL), yesterday.

Ripon and Roton both were members of the last BCL central committee. Ripon is an MSS student of sociology department at Dhaka University (DU) and Roton is an MPhil student of Philosophy at DU.

After the announcement of the election results, the new president and general secretary met Leader of the Opposition also President of AL Sheikh Hasina at her Sudha Sadan residence after placing wreaths at a portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Bangabandhu Bhaban on Road 32 of Dhammandi in the capital.

Welcoming the new BCL top leaders, Hasina directed them to work together to establish students' rights at first with campuses free of hooliganism. The AL chief also directed the new BCL leaderships to

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

## 2 additional secretaries promoted

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Two additional secretaries of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been promoted to the rank of secretary, says an official notification issued yesterday.

The newly promoted officials are -- AHM Moniruzzaman, additional Foreign Secretary (Multilateral) and Major (Retd) Khairuzzaman, Bangladesh Ambassador to Myanmar.

They will enjoy the rank and status of secretary.

At present, there are several secretary ranked officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Bangladesh High Commissioner in New Delhi Liqquat Ali Chowdhury, Ambassador in Berlin Manjur Rahim and Ambassador in Moscow Amir Hossain are among them.

## Frequent power outages at Sudha Sadan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sudha Sadan, the residence of Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, has been facing frequent power outages for the last couple of days.

What the Desa chief said was due to technical faults in line caused by

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Source: Islamic Foundation

## Opposition frustrated at development flow

Alleges PM

UNB, Amtali, Barguna

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has said the opposition is unleashing terrorism in the name of politics to foil the ongoing development programme of the government.

Addressing a public meeting at Amtali Degree College ground, she said her government has carried out massive development activities across the country and ensured peaceful life for the people.

The prime minister said the opposition has become frustrated to see the flow of development, as it could not meet the demands of the people during its rule.

They had established a reign of terror through creating godfa-

thers in every district of the country and did not do any development work, she said.

"People wanted to get rid of past Awami League (AL) rule for their misdeed and terrorist acts," she told her audience.

BNP had pledged to the people to eliminate terrorism before 2001 general elections and "we have done it".

The prime minister said as they (Awami League) have no issue, they frequently speak of resignation of an elected government.

She said while BNP was in opposition it had demanded resignation of the then Awami League government as they had established a

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

rested four regular starters while the hosts kept eight in the bench from their starting line-ups of the first two games.

After a cautious start from both sides, the game came alive on 28 minutes when Bangladesh forward Kanchan, who put the opposition backline under constant threat with his speedy runs, sent a teasing cross from the left. But second-choice goalie Ramzi came out of his line to fist the ball out before Topu could reach it.

Topu then went full-stretch to parry the ball for a corner a minute later when Topu unleashed a scorching left-footer from the edge of the box after being set through by a nice ball from Zahid Parvez.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

## Bangladesh draw with Palestine

SPORTS REPORTER

A series of heroic saves by goal-

keeper and stand-in captain Aminul Haque and Mehdi Hassan Topu's equaliser inspired the second-string Bangladesh side to hold favourites Palestine 1-1 in an exciting Group D match of the AFC Challenge Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Wednesday.

Palestine, who took the lead against the hosts on the hour through tournament top scorer Fahed Attal, emerged group champions by virtue of a better goal difference despite finishing level with Bangladesh on seven points.

Having booked their quarterfinal berths before the clash, Palestine

## TRIAL RESUMES

## Saddam trashes evidence

AFP, Baghdad

Former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein launched into a new tirade against his trial yesterday and

lambasted the interior ministry as the tumultuous process resumed after a three week break.

The only defendant in the court,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



Former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein argues with prosecutors while testifying during cross-examination in his trial held in Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone yesterday.

## Hartal enforced in Khulna for uplift demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The Greater Khulna Development Action Co-ordination Committee (GKDACC) enforced a daylong hartal in the city yesterday to press home its demands.

The demands include supply of gas through pipeline, construction of deep seaport at Akram point, reopening of all closed Jute mills and Khulna Newsprint Mill, installation of a 210MW power plant and a TV centre, and construction of an airport.

Normal life came to a halt as all modes of vehicles went off the roads and shops and educational institutions remained closed during the shutdown. There were no financial transactions in private and state-owned banks and production in mills and factories were suspended.

All political parties, including the ruling BNP, extended their support to the hartal. The GKDACC took out a procession in the city at noon. Leaders, activists and supporters of all political parties and socio-cultural organisations joined the procession.

