



**SANGSAD FIRE**  
Probe body fails to submit report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The inquiry committee on Saturday's "mysterious" fire inside the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban failed to submit its report yesterday amid questions about its effectiveness due to the inclusion of the top security officer in the probe body.

Parliament Secretariat officials said miscreants got the opportunity to set fire to three places inside the parliament building due to negligence of the security forces. Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar also echoed them.

Inclusion of Sergeant-at-Arms Captain Mohammad Faruk, in-charge of parliament security, in the investigation committee has aroused doubts over the effectiveness of the probe body.

The speaker, however, said the inclusion of the security officer will not influence investigation. "I will take action if any negligence is

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

## Gathering ban in tense Kansat

HC prohibits arrest or harassment of power-hungry villagers, asks govt to explain firings

STAR REPORT

Shibganj upazila administration yesterday banned any gathering in and around Kansat invoking Section 144, while the High Court in an ad-interim rule prohibited detention or harassment of any Palli Bidyu Unnayan Sangram Parishad (PBUSP) member outside legal provisions.

The HC rule came on a PIL (public interest litigation) petition filed by ZI Khan Panna as chairman of Bangladesh Bar Council's Human Rights and Legal Aid Committee in the wake of persis-

tent violence and unrest in five Chapainawabganj unions including Kansat. Thursday's PBUSP-BNP battle was the latest in a series of violent incidents that so far has killed 14 people and injured scores of others over a simple demand of villagers for uninterrupted power supply to those unions.

The court yesterday asked the government to explain in three weeks time why it should not be ordered to pay adequate compensations to the families of the violence victims.

The rule also wants the government and the local administration

and power-supply authorities to rationalise why they should not be directed to ensure a minimum supply of electricity to the restive area at night.

The home secretary, inspector general of police, deputy commissioner and police super of Chapainawabganj, officer-in-charge of Shibganj Police Station, Rural Electrification Board, and Palli Bidyu Samity are the respondents in the case.

They have to explain why the January 4 and January 23 police firings on demonstrating villagers

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

## US lobbyists hired for image building, 'positive' reporting

*They are to ensure 'balanced reporting on Bangladesh' among a waft of tasks*

STAR REPORT

The government has appointed three American lobbyists including an individual and two firms to arrange high-level interactions with the US government and build a "positive and correct image" of Bangladesh among the US policymakers.

The lobbyists have also been assigned to ensure "balanced reporting on Bangladesh" through mainstream media. They will coordinate with the relevant agencies of the US government to facilitate interactions in Bangladesh between the government and the representatives of the US government.

The firms, The Washington Group and Ketchum Washington (TWG/K), will get a monthly retainer fee of at least \$45,000 in addition to "certain out-of-pocket expenditure" that TWG/K will incur in connection with the services. It is not clear from documents how much the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Govt covering up its corruption by corrupt measure

Saber tells press

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) yesterday said the ruling alliance has "secretly" appointed a lobbyist group in the US to cover up government corruption by "another corrupt measure".

"The BNP-Jamaat-led coalition government is spending public money on the lobbyist group only for its political and personal interest," said Saber Hossain Chowdhury, political secretary to opposition leader Sheikh Hasina.

Addressing a press conference at the AL Dhanmondi office, Saber said the government wants a US certificate to regain power and is spending taxpayers' money for that. "But it must keep in mind that only people and the voters of this country will give such a certificate," he said.

Comparing the government's "conspiracy of election engineering" to "tip of the iceberg", the frontline AL leader suspected that the government might have more such hidden deals with the US lobbyists so that they can play roles in favour of the coalition government in the election year.

The image of the BNP-Jamaat government is tarnished due to rise of militant groups under their "direct" shelter, unabated corruption by alliance loyalists, human rights violations and slide in law and order, Saber said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



Shahriar Nafees takes off his helmet and raises his bat to the jubilant spectators after reaching three figures against Australia on day one of the first Test at Fatullah Cricket Stadium yesterday.

CEC says rule doesn't say how they committed contempt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz and ruling BNP lawmaker Nurul Islam Moni in reply to the Supreme Court's suo moto contempt rule yesterday said the rule does not explain how they had committed contempt of court.

Submitting petitions separately before the full bench of the Appellate Division yesterday, they urged the court not to bring contempt proceedings against them.

Chaired by Chief Justice Syed JR

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

## MORGUE IN MESS

### DMCH bogs down with Home cases

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

The home ministry, which needs the autopsies most for investigating into police cases and framing charges, displays an uncalled-for callousness in managing the post-mortem process.

According to DMCH sources, the Dhaka Medical College requires but one or two autopsy operations a day to teach its students. Instead, it has been shoul-

dering the burden of conducting no less than 10 post-mortems a day at the behest of the home ministry for the last 60 years since 1946.

Once coroners under the ministry try to carry out this task. So, it really is the ministry's responsibility to run the morgue, doctors at the DMCH forensic medical department point out. Besides dodging that responsibility, the ministry has made no financial

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Sangsad goes into session April 27

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Sangsad goes into session at 5:00pm on April 27.

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday summoned the 21st session of the House.

The Business Advisory Committee (BAC) of parliament, headed by the speaker, is scheduled to meet half an hour before the session to decide about its duration and business.

Parliament sources said the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

## Can't stop talking

When you have AKTEL **EXCEED**, it's not your fault.



50% savings  
from 2nd min

Tk 1/min from 4 am - 6 am  
from 2nd min

Lowest rate to 3 FnF numbers  
all day long

Connection fee

mobileLink Tk 350  
Mobile to Mobile

Pre-Paid Standard Tk 750  
TAT Local, NWD and IOD Incoming & outgoing

সময় ভুলে

AKTEL CLEARLY AHEAD

exceed

Committed to keeping you clearly ahead