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People's Right to Know

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## Agitation turning into movement against admin

SHAMIM ASHRAF, from Kansat

The unprecedented movement at Kansat in Chapainawabganj, claiming the lives of at least 20 people so far, is gradually turning into a movement against the administration though it began by demanding uninterrupted power supply.

Thousands of people joined a rally in Shyampur of the area yesterday and vowed to continue the ongoing movement until Rajshahi City Mayor and local BNP law-maker were punished for directing the police to open fire on people demanding electricity.

Carrying bamboo sticks, the demonstrators, including a good number of women, in the rally

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## Kansat becomes a ghost hamlet

Villagers flee by any means fearing more police excesses

SHAMIM ASHRAF and ANWAR ALI, from Kansat

Kansat has literally taken a deserted look as panicked locals of five unions under Shibganj upazila of Chapainawabganj fled for life, fearing further police excesses on them.

Hundreds of villagers were seen fleeing the areas on foot and by rickshaws and boats with whatever belongings they managed to bring with them. Abbasbazar,

Biyanibazar, Biswanathpur, Karimbazar, Mahilabazar, Dhokpukur and a few other villages of the area were found completely deserted.

The Palli Bidyut Unnayan Sangram Parishad (PBUSP) members, meanwhile, vowed to continue their movement until meeting its demands.

"Our demands could be met peacefully through discussion but the government has to create environment for that by withdrawing

section 144 of the Penal Code and the false cases and release the arrested," PBUSP Convener Golam Rabbani told The Daily Star yesterday.

The Awami League-led 14-party opposition combine yesterday held a protest meeting at Kansat with an attendance of around 20,000 locals and declared several programmes.

The locals yesterday buried three of the victims of Wednesday's

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## Babar blames protesters

UNB, Dhaka

State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar yesterday regretted the incidents at Kansat where several people were killed on Wednesday.

"I express my regret for the unfortunate incidents of Kansat," he told newsmen after the prison officials' conference at the Department of Prisons.

Police are trying to bring the situation under control, Babar said adding that the agitators swooped on the law enforcers at night, fired guns and exploded bombs that compelled the police to open gunfire.

The minister said the government thinks that all problems could be solved through discussion, as there is no alternative to

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## NEXT BUDGET

## Govt mulls special fund for 1 lakh staff

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The national budget for the next fiscal year (FY) may provide for recruiting about 100,000 new government staffs, with a special allotment earmarked for that, an establishment ministry source said.

But, as the World Bank has reservations about such massive fag-end recruitment, the government is likely to show the yet-to-be-created government posts as technical ones.

The source also said the process of filling up the one lakh 'technical' posts might start as early as July and completed within the next

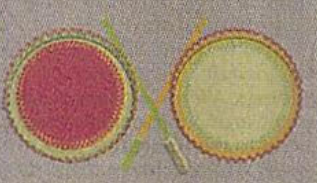
three months, before the 4-party alliance government ends its term. This is one of the popular programmes the government intends to incorporate into the budget for FY2006-07 with an aim to rip political gains in the upcoming general elections.

According to the finance ministry's initial estimations, FY07 may see a budget to the tune of Tk 71,000 crore, or 11 per cent larger than the current one, ministry sources said.

The Tk 64,383 crore current budget is also 13 per cent bigger than the original budget of the previous year of 2004-05.

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## GREETINGS



The Daily Star wishes its valued readers, patrons, well-wishers and advertisers a happy Bangla New Year.

## Holiday Notice

The Daily Star offices will remain closed today on account of Pahela Baishakh, the first day of Bangla year. Therefore, there will be no issue of the newspaper tomorrow.

## 14-party calls hartal on Apr 20

Kansat killings spark massive protests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League-led 14-party opposition alliance enforces a dawn-to-dusk hartal across the country on April 20 protesting killings in Kansat by police during villagers' demonstration demanding uninterrupted power supply.

Meanwhile, different political parties and social organisations yesterday issued separate

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## Commentary

## Tell us why Kansat people being killed?

MAHFUZ ANAM

We have seen a lot of brutality by the police and other law enforcers in this country. But nothing can compare to the mindless killing that has been going on at Kansat during the last four months. The happenings at Kansat boggle the mind. Seldom, if ever, have we seen such police brutality upon our

usually meek and peace-loving villagers. They have been shot at, mercilessly beaten, violently attacked and indiscriminately arrested. In the last few days, they have had their houses raided and personal belongings looted. Now most of the men are away from their homes and women are coming out to agitate. Why? What

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## PAHELA BAISHAKH PM, Hasina exchange greetings

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina have exchanged greetings on the occasion of Pahela Baishakh.

Sources said the prime minister sent a greetings card to the Awami League chief's residence in Dhanmondi yesterday while Hasina had sent her greetings card to Khaleda on Wednesday.



PHOTO: STAR

Students of the Institute of Fine Arts set masks out to use those in their traditional rally today to hail the Bangla New Year 1413.

## Pahela Baishakh brings new hopes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is Pahela Baishakh, the first day of the first month of Bangla calendar year 1413. The weary sun of 1412 set last evening and took away all the sorrows of loss and melancholy of unfulfilled expectations. And a new sunrise this morning brings with it new hopes and spirit for better days as it ushers in the first day of Bangla New Year.

Everything around will wear a bright, colourful look and people will radiate joy and happiness as

Bangalees at home and across the globe celebrate Pahela Baishakh amid fanfare and gaiety.

In the capital, the most colourful celebration of the New Year begins at the Ramna Batamul at sunrise with Chhayanaut's programme.

A large number of people will gather early in the morning under the banyan tree at the Ramna Park as the Chhayanaut artists welcome the day with Rabindranath Tagore's famous song "Esho hey

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**শুভ নববর্ষ**

নতুন বছরের শুভ সূচনায় সন্মানিত গ্রাহক এবং শুভাকাঙ্ক্ষীদের জানাই আন্তরিক শুভেচ্ছা

১লা বৈশাখ (১৪ এপ্রিল, ২০০৬) শুক্রবার

আমাদের বর্ষ বরন অনুষ্ঠানে আপনাদের জানাই সাদর আমন্ত্রণ।

যে সকল গ্রাহক আমাদের আমন্ত্রন কার্ড পাননি তাদেরকেও জানাই সাদর আমন্ত্রণ।

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নতুন বছরের পোনার চমক! ভেনাস জুয়েলার্সের সকল গ্রাহক এটি শাখায় যে কোন শাখা থেকে স্বর্ণ ক্রয়ে AB Bank থেকে স্বর্ণ সুবিধা গ্রহণ করতে পারবেন

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