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Sajeda, Naziur, Taimur

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#### Govt says US HR report lacks balance

STAR REPORT

The government yesterday termed the US state department's Human Rights Practices Report 2007 on Bangladesh disappointing for its "lack of balance" in presenting the country's ground realities.

Reacting to the report released in Washington Tuesday saying the caretaker government's human rights record worsened in part due to the state of emergency and postponement of elections, the foreign ministry said Bangladesh is committed to upholding human rights of all its citizens in

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100 UPAZILAS

## Publication of draft voter list this month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) plans to start publishing draft voter lists with photographs of around 100 upazilas this month and finalise those in May.

As per the plan, the EC Secretariat drafted a schedule for publication of draft voter lists of 11 upazilas on March 16 to finalise those by mid-April, sources in the

EC Secretariat said.

The 11 upazilas are Bogra Sadar, Chapainawabganj Sadar, Comilla Sadar South, Rouzan and Sitakunda of Chittagong district, Jessore Sadar, Rupsha of Khulna district, Poba and Putia of Rajshahi district, Rangpur Sadar, Gongachara of Rangpur district.

The EC plans to direct field-level election offices to begin publication of draft voter lists of the rest of

the upazilas where the voter registration work is complete.

If everything goes smoothly and according to the plan, the voter lists of at least 100 upazilas will be ready by next May, officials at the EC Secretariat added.

Elections to these upazilas can be held after two months of finalising the voter list, if the EC decides to hold elections to those upazila

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NIKO CASE

Probe report on Khaleda placed before ACC

Hasina asked to defend herself

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The investigation report in the Niko graft case against former premier Khaleda Zia and four others was submitted to the Anticorruption Commission (ACC) yesterday with a proposal for indicting nine more persons. Meanwhile, the ACC also issued

Sheikh Hasina to submit her wealth an official letter yesterday to another detained former premier Sheikh Hasina, asking her to

became valid. SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

ACC notice issued on Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday

cancelled the High Court verdict

that declared illegal issuance of the

Anti-Corruption Commission

(ACC) notice asking former pre-

mier and Awami League chief

Meanwhile, the SC also and Taimur. cancelled the HC order of staying The seven-member full bench operation of similar ACC notices to of the Appellate Division headed by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, AL Chief Justice Mohammad Ruhul presidium member Syeda Sajeda Amin delivered the verdict follow-Chowdhury, Bangladesh Janata ingan appeal by ACC.

Party Chairman Naziur Rahman The same court also cancelled Manju and ex-BRTC chairman the stay on operation of ACC Taimur Alam Khandaker. notices to Khaleda, Sajeda, Naziur With the apex court's decision and Taimur following the anti-graft Following the SC decision the ACC can now advance with its watchdog's leave to appeal against proceedings regarding the notices the HC interim orders. to Hasina, Khaleda, Sajeda, Naziur

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### GAS CRISIS, WARMING WEATHER Load-shedding creeps up to 500MW

SHARIER KHAN

A shortfall in gas supply coupled with rising demand for power with the arrival of warmer weather is causing daily official load shedding of 400MW-500MW.

According to Power Development Board (PDB), problems in gas supply caused 554MW less power generation yesterday.

In addition, power generation at a few power plants that have a capacity to produce more than 200MW electricity has remained suspended for maintenance work.

The power plants that run on natural gas have a daily demand for around 800 million cubic feet gas a day (mmcfd), but these are presently getting around 642 mmcfd

"But we are hoping the situation will ease up from Saturday," said a PDB official, adding, "A 110MW coal-fired power unit of Barapukuria that was shut down several days ago will begin operation from Saturday."

Presently gas companies under Petrobangla are able to supply

around 1,700 mmcfd gas. Gas supply to Chittagong has been declining for the last few years because of nose-diving gas production from the Sangu gas field. Chittagong is experiencing a shortage of around 100 mmcfd gas supply, for which gas-fired power

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Indigenous people perform after completing a procession celebrating the Adivashi Sangskritik Utsab 2008 at Shilpakala Academy in the city yesterday.

#### WOMEN'S STATUS, GENDER EQUALITY | Order for return Bangladesh outshines of Hasina's India, Pakistan

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh outperforms India and Pakistan in many areas concerning women's status and gender equality, though the picture of their access to reproductive health services, labour markets and decision-making is still bleak, said a World Bank report.

The report said Bangladesh stands out as a shining new example in South Asia achieving impressive gains in gender equality despite being a poor country.

After Sri Lanka and the Indian state of Kerala, Bangladesh dwarfs Pakistan and India in many areas, said the WB report titled "Whispers to Voices: Gender and Social

Transformation in Bangladesh". I was launched yesterday at a function at the LGED auditorium.

HC VERDICT ON HASINA'S WEALTH STATEMENT CANCELLED

SC says ACC notice legal

Also cancels stay orders on notices to Khaleda,

Supported by the World Bank and AusAid, Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) arranged the launch ceremony.

Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury addressed the function as chief guest, with Junaid Ahmed, sector manager for Social Development of the World Bank, in the chair.

Xian Zhu, WB country director in Bangladesh, Rokeya Sultana, secretary of women and children affairs ministry, and Douglas Foskett, Australian high commissioner in Dhaka, also spoke on the occasion.

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# passport stayed

Matin terms her doctors 'partisan'

STAR REPORT

A Dhaka court that had ordered the government Wednesday to return detained Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina her seized passport stayed the order yesterday until March 31.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Golam Rabbani issued the stay order following a prayer by the state side that termed Wednesday's court order unilat-

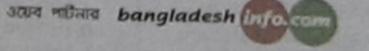
Meanwhile, Home Adviser Maj Gen (retd) MA Matin yesterday termed the doctors "partisan" who recommended sending the

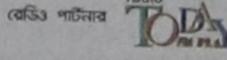
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through the call center or website • Each participant will be given a number, the name of the primary selection center, date and time as soon as s/he registers • A participant can register only once • The name of the primary selection centers and dates will be published again in the national dailies at a later stage . The participants may be asked to show proof of nationality and age . Primary selection for non-resident Bangladeshis will be held in New York, London, Toronto, and Dubai (See website for details and registration) • The judges' decision will be considered final • Participants who already have any form of music album i.e, CD, cassette etc. is not eligible to enter the competition # All participants except the top ten participants from Closeup 1 2005 and 2006 may partake in this competition Only a limited number of participants can participate from each center... So Hurry... Persons working in Unilever Bangladesh Limited, Adcomm Ltd., Market Access Provider Limited, NTV and other organizations associated with Close Up 1 cannot partake in this competition • Closeup 1 authority reserves the sole right to change or amend anything related to the competition without prior notice.







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