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# JS boost for judiciary

Parliamentary body recommends pay, benefit hike for judges; steps to reduce huge backlog of cases

SHAKHAWAT LITON and RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary sub-committee has recommended introduction of judicial allowances and increased salaries and other benefits for judges of the Supreme Court and subordinate courts.

It termed their existing salaries "inconsistent" with the socio-economic situation in the country.

Salaries and allowances of SC judges should be increased by more than three times and those of subordinate court judges should also be raised significantly, the House body proposed.

Moreover, it recommended setting up metropolitan sessions judge's courts in four divisional headquarters-- Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet and Barisal, and metropolitan magistracy in Sylhet and Barisal to reduce the huge backlog of cases.

The sub-committee suggested that women and children repression prevention tribunals be set up at 32 district headquarters still without such tribunals, and creation of the posts of 64 more additional district judge, 64 joint district judge and 100 assistant judge.

"Without increasing the number of courts and appointing more judges, it is not possible to reduce the huge backlog of cases," observed the sub-committee formed by the parliamentary standing committee on the law ministry.

The sub-committee, in its report placed before the standing committee recently, said over 15 lakh cases remained pending with the subordinate courts till January this year.

Of this, 8.07 lakh cases were pending with the tribunals, district and sessions judge's courts and metropolitan session judge's courts, and another 7.18 lakh

cases with the judicial and metropolitan magistracy.

The five-member sub-committee is also drafting proposals for enactment of a law specifying qualifications for appointment of SC judges to end controversy over their appointment. The country's constitution asks for enactment of such a law but it was not done in the last 38 years since independence.

Substantiating the proposed increase in salaries and allowances of judges of the SC and its subordinate courts, the report said salaries of SC judges in India and Pakistan are several times that of judges of the apex court in Bangladesh.

And salaries of the judges of subordinate courts in Bangladesh are much less than salaries of those in Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

"Salaries of judges [of both higher and

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President Zillur Rahman, also the chancellor of Dhaka University, awards Abdullah Gül with an honorary Doctor of Laws degree at a special convocation at the Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban of the university yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Amartya Sen points at public welfare

Sees nothing wrong in opposing ruling party stance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nobel laureate Prof Amartya Sen yesterday said there is nothing wrong about the Opposition taking stance against the ruling party if it is aimed at public welfare.

"The Opposition would oppose in the multi-party democracy. But they would neglect their constructive role if they focus on other issues rather than public welfare including education and health," he told the journalists after a dialogue yesterday.

The two-day dialogue titled "Indo-Bangladesh Dialogue on Health and Education: Learning from Neighbours" organised by Brac, Centre for

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## Climate fund stays in pledge still

Seminar told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at an international seminar expressed concerns over getting the climate change fund pledged by the developed countries at the Copenhagen climate summit saying that the fund is insufficient with sourcing of money uncertain.

They voiced their concerns at an international seminar titled "Financing Climate Change: Post-Copenhagen Challenges and Way Forward" held at a city hotel yesterday.

Campaign for Sustainable Rural Livelihood (CSRL) and Oxfam International jointly organised the seminar.

The COP-15 has pledged 30 billion US dollars as global climate fund for the period of 2010-2012 for adaptation and mitigation of climate change impacts.

While Copenhagen pledge is not legally binding, there has not been any institutional arrangement to conduct the climate fund and it remains unclear whether overseas development assistance (ODA) will be treated as cli-

mate fund, said CSRL Convenor Ahsan Uddin Ahmed.

Much of the pledge on climate fund has so far been mere rhetoric with very little delivery, he said.

Questions like who will administer the climate fund and will the vulnerable countries have direct access to the fund still remain unanswered, said Ahmed.

There has not yet been any tangible development of 10 billion dollars for the year 2010, said Dr Atiq Rahman, executive director of Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies.

The UNFCCC says that all climate financing will be new and additional, he mentioned adding readjustment of ODA is not acceptable.

"The COP-15 climate summit was one of the most manipulated, intellectually dishonest and mismanaged conferences of the parties I have attended," said Rahman.

He placed stress on accountability, transparency, adequacy and sustainability at all levels in the process of spending climate fund.

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## SHIDHIRGANJ PLANT PM to open first power unit today

UNB, Dhaka

A newly built 120-megawatt power plant will be inaugurated at Siddhirganj today to deal with electricity shortages in the country.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the 120MW first unit of the Siddhirganj 240MW power plant project.

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## FIRE AT CTG SLUM

# Four siblings burnt to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Four minor siblings were burnt to death as a fire broke out at a slum in Aturer Depot area of Chittagong city early Saturday.

The blaze also gutted at least 36 shanties. The deceased were identified as Tanzina, 4, Alauddin, 5, Salahuddin, 7 and Nurun Nabi, 10. Their mother Hosne Ara Begum, a widow, survived the fire.

The children were asleep when the fire broke out. Fire service sources said the fire originated in one of the shanties of Md Ali Colony at Shantibag from a mosquito coil at

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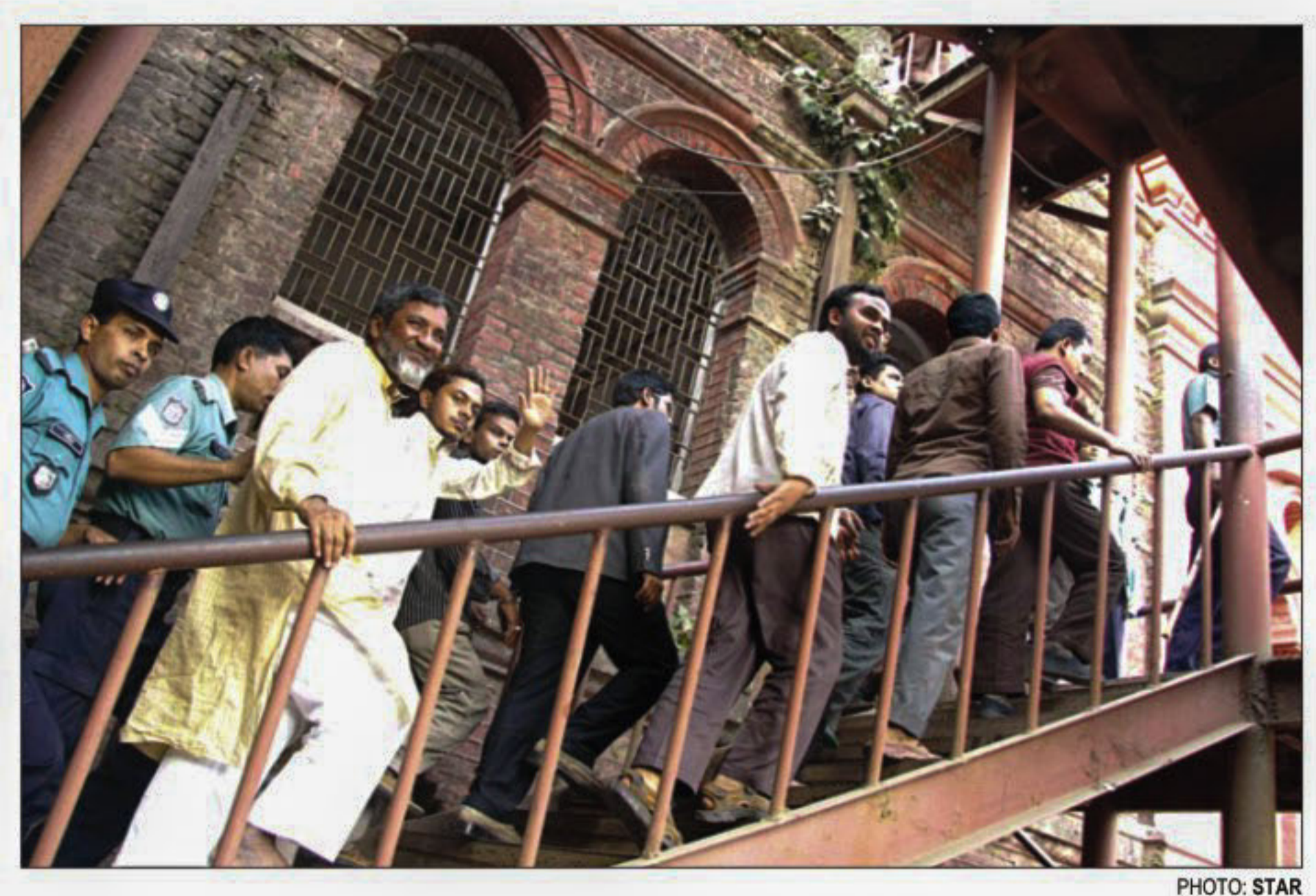
## 16TH SAARC SUMMIT Bhutanese envoy in city to invite PM

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A special envoy of the Bhutanese prime minister arrived in the capital yesterday to invite Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to the 16th Saarc summit to be held in Thimphu on April 28-29.

The envoy, Bhutanese Minister for Economic Affairs Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, will hand over to Hasina the

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Police take detained Jamaat and Shibir activists including Chittagong city Jamaat Nayebe Ameer Ahsanullah, wearing white punjabi, to the metropolitan magistrate's court in the port city yesterday.

## BCL LEADER'S MURDER Party feud, link of drug peddlers suspected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Internal feud or a bold role against local criminals and drug peddlers by Cantonment Thana Chhatra League president AKM Faruk Hossain might have led to his killing on Friday, police and family members suspect.

Local and central leaders of the ruling party's student organisation, however, held Jamaat's student front Islami Chhatra Shibir responsible for the murder.

"We have arrested three

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**OnlinePoll** ✓  
Do you support opposition boycott of JS once again?  
No (64.7%)  
Yes (33.6%)  
No Comments (1.7%)  
Total votes: 703  
TODAY'S POLL  
Do you think the government will take action against the influential persons who are encroaching on a portion of Gulshan Lake defying the high court order?  
Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

## Tarique's cases against Hasina, Quader dismissed

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Two defamation cases filed by Tarique Rahman against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her party colleague Obaidul Quader were dismissed last year upon a judicial inquiry.

It however could be known only recently. Tarique, now senior vice-chairman of BNP, filed three defamation cases against Awami League President Hasina, the then AL general secretary Abdul Jalil and Obaidul Quader on November 19, 2006.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate AKM Enamul Haque dismissed the case against Hasina on August 16 last year, while Metropolitan Magistrate Kanika Biswas rejected the charges against Quader on November 22 the same year.

They cited that the complainant and witnesses were not interested in proceeding with the cases.

The case against Jalil is still pending with a Dhaka court, which has granted several time prayers by Tarique's counsel since December 2006.

The chief metropolitan magistrate's court in Dhaka had ordered judicial inquiry into all the three cases without taking



## Book fair puts on Falgun colour

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Festivity marked the Amar Ekusho Book Fair yesterday on the occasion of Pohela Falgun with a huge crowd, particularly young girls and boys in colourful traditional dresses, visiting the premises.

Girls in yellow sarees and boys in punjabis gathered on the Bangla Academy premises in large number to welcome Pahela Falgun as well as to browse books at the fair.

Most of the visitors were seen carrying a number of new books on the second consecutive holiday of the week.

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**Prayer Timing**  
February 14

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-25	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	5-57	6-01
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

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