



EXPORT SLOWS

Growth was 2.53pc in March compared to 12pc in February
PAGE B1

BOAL AND "SPECT-ACTING"

Brazilian director calls traditional theatre "oppressive"
PAGE 11

IRON LADY NO MORE

Margaret Thatcher, ex-British PM, dies from stroke at 87
PAGE 3,7,B4



Easy illegally

Shyampur slum people pay Tk 500 each for connection, Tk 50 a month for uninterrupted supply of Wasa water; legal subscribers of locality complain about dearth of water

MORSHED ALI KHAN and ANISUR RAHMAN

While the entire Shyampur area in the capital's south-eastern part reels under chronic water shortage, an unscrupulous gang is illegally providing 24-hour water supply to hundreds of households and businesses in the slums along a two-km stretch of the railway track.

The slum dwellers said each household or business pays Tk 500 for the illegal connection and Tk 50 per month for the non-stop supply of water. The unofficial Wasa (Water and Sewerage Authority) subscribers also pay an additional amount for the two-inch diameter pipe. Small factories, shops and restaurants also pay for the illegal connections. The practice has continued for years, slum dwellers said.

Genuine Wasa subscribers in the locality, which includes a 200-plot Rajuk residential area and has an industrial zone nearby, said they hardly get tap water in their houses during daytime.

Shahadat Hossain, a house owner in the area, alleged that the entire business of illegal connections is controlled by some unscrupulous people working at the Wasa pump house near the Rajuk housing complex.

He mentioned that every household in the area has to remain awake till late in the night when a trickle of water comes down the tap for keeping it for the next day.

"We are very annoyed to learn about the uninterrupted water supply in the slums while genuine

SEE PAGE 19 COL 3



Fresh water from a Dhaka Wasa pump station is delivered to slum dwellers beside the rail lines in Namapara in Shyampur in the capital through at least 500 illegal connections. Inset, a man adds another illegal connection to the tally. Locals claimed that legitimate connection holders have to stay up at night to collect water but the slum dwellers get Wasa water 24/7.

PM's view rejected by Hefajat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hefajat-e Islam has rejected what Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told the media yesterday in connection with its demand for an anti-blasphemy law.

Existing laws were sufficient to punish anyone for insulting Islam, the PM said in an interview with BBC. She also said her government did not have any plans of framing a new law in this regard.

At its Saturday rally in the capital, Hefajat gave

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

No blasphemy law needed

Hasina tells BBC existing law enough to punish offenders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday firmly rejected the Islamists' demand for a blasphemy law to punish those who defame Islam and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

In an interview with the BBC World, she said there are already laws and ways to protect the religious rights of people.

"They have demanded it. Actually, we don't have any plan [to bring in the law]. We don't need it. They should know that



existing laws are enough," Hasina said.

"This country is a secular democracy. So each and every religion has the right to be practised freely and fairly. But it is not fair to hurt anybody's religious feelings. We always try to protect every religious sentiment."

The prime minister's comments came barely two days after Hefajat-e Islam, a Chittagong-based Islamist

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4
FULL INTERVIEW WITH BBC
WORLD NEWS - PAGE 15

Jamaat charter still not proper

EC informs HC; hearing of writ petition today

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Some provisions of Jamaat-e-Islami's charter still go against the country's constitution and the Representation of the People Order (RPO), the Election Commission said in response to a High Court rule.

The EC yesterday sent its response to Additional Attorney General MK Rahman, who is representing the commission in a long-pending writ petition with the HC challenging the legality of Jamaat's registration with the EC.

In the rule, the EC was made one of the respondents as it registered Jamaat with it before the ninth parliamentary election in 2008.

The HC is scheduled to hear the petition today.

"We've sent the reply to the rule today [yesterday]. The additional attorney general will submit our reply to the court," Election

SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

MARGARET THATCHER (1925-2013)

Lady not for turning

SYED BADRUL AHSAN

When Margaret Thatcher was forced out of 10 Downing Street in November 1990 by her party colleagues, former British prime minister Edward Heath cheerfully exclaimed: "Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice!" It was not just a sign of the bitterness Heath continued to demonstrate toward the woman, once his protégé, who had beaten him to the leadership of the Conservative Party in the mid-1970s. It was also a hint of the strong emotions Thatcher aroused among large sections

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5



BCL SHOW

Former Chhatra League man Masum brandishes his shotgun, top, during a clash with Hefajat-e Islam activists at Lalkhan Bazar in Chittagong yesterday morning. Another pro-ruling party Chhatra League activists is seen running with a handgun on Jubilee Road in the port city yesterday afternoon during a clash with BNP activists. A little bit down the road three other Chhatra League cadres were seen firing on opposition BNP men. More photos on page 3.

PHOTO: STAR/ BANGLAR CHOKH



Clashes mark Hefajat hartal

36-hour shutdown of BNP, allies from today

STAR REPORT

Hefajat-e Islam men blocked rail lines and highways and clashed with ruling party men and police during their countrywide daylong hartal yesterday that left at least 60 people injured.

At least seven policemen and four journalists were among the injured as cops and journo continue to be at the receiving end of Hefajat's wrath. A police outpost and a local office of a TV channel were also vandalised yesterday.

Train services between Dhaka and Sylhet, Chittagong, Noakhali, and Chandpur were disrupted as Hefajat men put barricades on rail lines in Brahmanbaria town. They also blocked Dhaka-Chittagong, Dhaka-Sylhet and Dhaka-Narayanganj highways.

The pro-hartal men resorted to vandalism and arson at places although the leaders of Hefajat promised a peaceful hartal.

The leaders of the organisation's Dhaka unit yesterday claimed that they were non-violent throughout the day but activists of pro-government student body Bangladesh Chhatra League and ruling Awami League's youth front Jubo League, and police attacked and opened fire on them in some districts.

The radical Islamist organisation had called for the shutdown protesting "government obstacles" to their Saturday's rally.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5