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## NEW SPEAKER

## No confirmed candidate

Shirin likely nominee; deputy speaker may resign

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

The ninth parliament is likely to get a female Speaker as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has desired to see a woman in the third constitutional position of the country.

State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury is the one Hasina has chosen for the position, a senior minister said yesterday.

If the ruling Awami League proposes her name for the Speaker position, she will be the first female speaker in the country.

Some of the ministers, however, said she would be younger for the Speaker post and so recommended her name for the deputy speaker post instead, a minister told The Daily Star preferring not to be quoted.

A few other lawmakers, including Fazle Rabbi, Ali Ashraf and Abdul Matin Khasru, have also been thought for the position.



Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury

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## Razakar 'founder' awaits trial

Investigators bring 15 war crimes charges against Jamaat leader AKM Yusuf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami leader AKM Yusuf was involved in the killing of more than 700 people, and arson, looting, forced religious conversion and deportation of people during the Liberation War, an investigation agency said.

After around 15 month's investigation, the probe agency to investigate into the alleged crimes of Yusuf, historically known as the founder of the Razakar force, has brought allegations of 15 incidents



- Killing of around 700 in six incidents of genocide
- Forcing religious conversion of 200 Hindu people
- Looting, arson of around 300 houses
- Looting, arson of around 400 shops

of crimes against him.

The allegations include killing

of around 700 people in six incidents of genocide, killing of eight people, forcing religious conversion of 200 Hindus, looting and

arson of around 300 houses and 400 shops.

At a press briefing yesterday, investigation officer Helal Uddin said out of 15 incidents of crimes, they have evidence that Yusuf was present at the crime scenes of six. Yusuf ordered commissioning of the remaining nine crimes against humanity, Helal claimed.

The investigation agency coordinator Abdul Hannan Khan and Helal Uddin revealed the probe findings at the press briefing at the

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## Govt to recast labour law to retain GSP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved in principle a proposal to amend the labour law to ease the procedures of forming trade unions at factories.

Currently owners decide on who will represent the unions that ultimately fail to safeguard workers' interests.

The approval was given at the weekly cabinet meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair. Cabinet Secretary M. Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan briefed reporters after the meeting.

The move comes as the government

has expedited efforts to improve labour and safety standards under pressure from international communities.

The US, the single largest export destination for Bangladeshi products, threatened to discontinue a trade benefit after the Tazreen Fashions fire claimed 112 lives.

After the fire, Bangladesh had to attend an emergency hearing of the United States Trade Representative on March 28 to explain its position to retain the benefit -- generalised system of preferences (GSP) -- in the US market.

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## Govt warns against misuse of mosques' loudspeakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The home ministry has decided that punitive action will be taken against the authorities concerned if loudspeakers of mosques are used in provoking anarchy.

"Those who are in-charge of mosques will be held responsible for such misuse of mikes," Kamal Uddin Ahmed, additional secretary of the ministry, said in a report of the private television Channel i.

To act against removal of fishplates by pro-Hartal supporters, some phone numbers have been

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A bus burns on Topkhana Road in the capital yesterday afternoon on the eve of a 36-hour countrywide hartal called by the BNP-led 18-party opposition alliance.

## Shake-up in police dept

69 senior officials transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a major reshuffle in police administration, the government yesterday transferred 69 senior officials including a deputy inspector general (DIG) to different units and places.

Among the officials are 18 additional deputy inspectors general (ADIG) and 50 officials of the ranks of superintendent of police (SP) or deputy commissioner (DC) of police, said sources at police headquarters.

DIG Md Nazibur Rahman has been given the charge of the proposed Counter Terrorism Unit at the headquarters. He was earlier posted at the Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi.

Contacted, Inspector General of Police Hassan Mahmood Khandker said the officials have been transferred as part of a routine work of the police department.

Asked whether the transfers were linked to the country's present situation and political violence, the IGP

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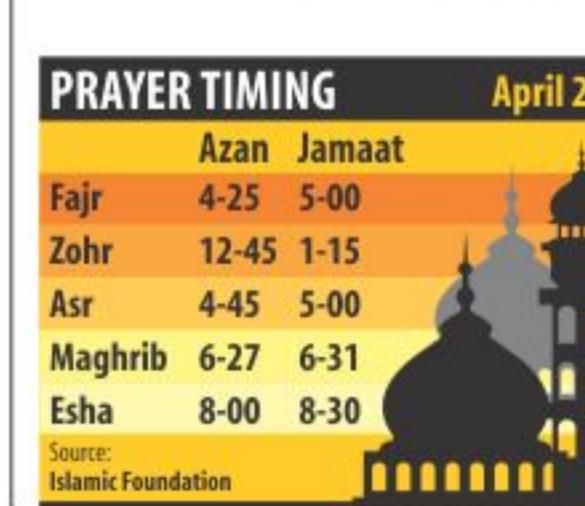
## Plot on for 'Minus 1' formula

PM tells colleagues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said various formulas over holding the next parliamentary polls were given to further complicate the ongoing situation and that conspiracies were being hatched to implement a "minus-one formula".

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## Myanmar accused of 'ethnic cleansing'

New BBC video reveals violence

AFP, Bangkok

Myanmar has waged "a campaign of ethnic cleansing" against Rohingya Muslims, a top rights watchdog said yesterday, citing evidence of mass graves and forced displacement affecting tens of thousands.

The Rohingya, who are denied citizenship by the country also known as Burma, have faced crimes against humanity including murder, persecution, deportation and forced transfer, New York-based Human Rights Watch said.

Myanmar officials, community leaders

and Buddhist monks organised and encouraged mobs, backed by state security forces, to conduct coordinated attacks on Muslim villages in October in the western state of Rakhine, HRW said.

The BBC also yesterday released footage, which appeared to show police standing by as Buddhist rioters, including monks, attacked Muslims in the town of Meiktila in March.

The British broadcaster said in one case police looked on as a severely burned

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The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited

ONLINE POLL

Do you agree with Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) that implementation of the Padma bridge project with own financing would eat up a significant share of the additional allocation in the next budget?

Yes  (87%)

No  (13%)

TOTAL VOTES: 261

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina that civil society members are complicating the political situation by giving different formulas about polls-time government?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT

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YOU MAY ALSO VOTE AT

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## ROUND TRIP TO MARS IN 2018

Applications open for couple

MAIL ONLINE

A mission is going to send the first humans to the red planet.

Those chosen for a round trip, which will blast off in 2018, will pave the way for a Mars base in 2023.

They will have to spend 501 days together in cramped conditions - meaning they will probably be a married couple in their 50s who already know they can get on.

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A drawing provided by Inspiration Mars shows an artist's conception of a spacecraft envisioned by the private group, which wants to send a married couple on a mission to fly by the red planet and zip back home, beginning in 2018.

PHOTO: AP

## BCL men enter girls' dormitory

Beat up medical college students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some Bangladesh Chhatra League activists yesterday allegedly stormed the female dormitory of Sir Salimullah Medical College in the capital and assaulted some female students there over supply of beds.

Sources at the college said the authorities started supplying some

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