# NEWS

# **Municipal job**

agriculture.

the municipality.

about the matter.

nage

did not know of the matter".

When contacted over mobile

phone, Alauddin Alo told newsmen

that he was preparing to appeal to

higher court regarding the judge-

ment. He also said a vested quarter

was trying to tarnish his political

Islam, Selim Reza, Rustam Ali,

Shariful Islam and Idris Ali also

Four persons have been sentenced

to death by a court in Naogaon for

killing an elderly person, Baytul

Sarder, 70, resident of Hasaigari

spoke on the occasion.

Four to die

for murder

BSS, Rajshahi

absentia

Other SNC members Ashraful

### FROM PAGE 12

area-dwellers. They are allegedly holding processions and meetings in the area every day protesting the appointment.

Under the banner of Shachetan Nagorik Committee (SNC), a fivehour hartal on January 10 was also observed

The SNC held a press conference yesterday at the Rajshahi Metropolitan Press Club, SNC convenor Md. Altafur Rahman read out a written statement in the conference

Speakers at the press conference said, at least 15 of SNC workers were reportedly injured in an attack made on a pro-hartal rally by an armed group on hartal day.

They also mentioned that the SNC leaders had filed a complaint with the Mohonpur Police Station accusing 11 persons. But Haider Ali Mollah, OC of the thana, allegedly denied to record the case. Later Idris Ali, a SNC leader filed a case with a first class magistrate court of Rajshahi on Januarv 11.

They also challenged the very declaration of the newly formed municipality. Quoting the Pourasabha Ordinance of 1977 they said, to declare an area as a municipality, the profession of at

# Dacoity at Proshika office in Gaibandha

**OUR CORRESPONDENT.** Gaibandha

A dacoity was committed at Proshika office at Palashbari in the district Wednesday night. According to Palashbari police, a

gang of about ten armed dacoits entered the office at around 11 pm. They confined three employees

in a room at gunpoint and looted two motorbikes, one computer, one VCP set, three fans, other valuables and Tk 4000 in cash

A case was filed with Palashbari police station. None was, however, arrested in

this connection till yesterday eve-

# 9 sentenced to 10yrs jail for killing Khulna **BNP** leader

### UNB, Khulna

A special tribunal vesterday sentenced nine people to 10 years imprisonment for killing Ikhtiarudin Bablu, local BNP leader, in August 1997. The convicts are Shahadat

Hossain, Delwar, Rahim, Hero, Rafigul, Lipu, Mushfigur Rahman Hirok, Farid and Rezaul. According to the prosecution, a

gang of criminals fired gunshots and BSS, Ctq threw crackers on Bablu a Banargati bazar on August 22, 1997. He died on the spot.

### **Travel alert** FROM PAGE 12 continues to experience some anti-

American sentiment as a result of least 75 percent of the area US military and other actions in the dwellers must be other than agriculwar against terrorism and events in the Middle East. But, they claimed, the profession

"Anti-American demonstrations of more than 85 per cent of the throughout Bangladesh frequently dwellers of Kesharhat depends on occur on Friday afternoons but have They also informed that a writthe potential to take place at any petition had been filed with the high time and to be unruly," it said.

It further adds that domestic court challenging the declaration of politically inspired violence has not When contacted, superintendent abated since the 2001 election police in Rajshahi Anisur Rahman campaign. While Americans in Bangladesh have not been the told that he was not well informed targets of the violence, they should When asked why the SNC case consider it when planning their was not recorded, OC Mollah said, "I movements

"Public demonstrations marches and labour strikes are widely used as means of political expression in Banaladesh. The political opposition over the past several years has called a number of general strikes, or "hartals," resulting in the virtual shutdown of transportation and commerce, and sometimes attacks on individuals who do not observe the hartals. Clashes between rival political

groups during hartals have resulted in deaths and injuries. American citizens are therefore urged to avoid all political protests, demonstrations, and marches," the State Department adds. "During hartals, American citizens should exercise caution in all areas and remain

In addition. the State Department

marked crime as a growing problem

in Bangladesh, particularly in the

major cities of Dhaka and

Project (DUTP), funded by the

World Bank, which will cover some

Under this project the RHD will

construct and repair more than 30

main roads, which include

Panthapath Road, Agargaon to

Shaymoli, Asadgate to

Mohammadpur bus stand, Ananda

cinema hall to Bijoy Sarani, Banani

rail gate to Mohakhali. American

embassy to Gulshan-2 circle and

Gulshan-1 circle to Gulshan Arong

and some 20 roads in Zone-4. All

these will cover about 24 kilometers.

kilometers of roads, which include

Kataban, North South Road

Nababpur Road, Kakrail,

Fakirapool, Kadam Chattar, Purana

Paltan, Bijoy Nagar and Shapla

Also, Sonargaon Intersection-

Shahbagh-Sharak Bhavan-Curzon

Hall, Bangla Motor-Moghbazar-

Mouchak Razarbagh-Kamlapur

"We have already started field

work in some areas and the work

order of the rest will be finalised

soon," a top official of RHD said

Foods Exporters Association, said

the US decision would have a

negative impact on the country's

friendly countries of Bangladesh.

So, the government has to identify

reasons why it has been listed as a

Software and Information Service

(BASIS) President Habibullah N

Karim also feels that the decision to

brand Bangladesh as a high-risk

Commerce and Industry (DCCI)

Matiur Rahman is also concerned at

the US decision because of its

"It would not only hamper our

business with the US but also with

other countries in the world," he

said. "Being a moderate Muslim

country, Bangladesh was never

involved in any sort of terrorism or

The Bangladesh Knitwear

Manufacturers and Exporters

Association (BKMEA) President

Monjurul Huq said the decision was

a matter of serious concern

"It is very sad for us because the

because exports would hard hit.

The Bangladesh Association of

"The US is one of the most

Chattar in Motiiheel.

project, sources added.

about to be completed.

preferring anonymity.

FROM PAGE 1

Hurt export

export-oriented industries.

high-risk one," he added.

country is unwarranted.

impact on software export.

market for Bangladesh

ramifications on exports.

destructive activities

Huq said.

observed.

The RHD will also develop 16

mportant roads, said the sources.

Rickety run

inside their hotels, residences, schools, or workplaces, whenever possible. Due to several kidnappings,

extreme caution.

Chittagong.

FROM PAGE 12

village of the same district. including those of foreign nationals. The convicts have been identi-US citizens are advised against fied as Akbar Ali, Afzal Hossain, travelling to Khagrachari. Abdul Kalam Azad and Moslem Rangamati and Bandarban unless Uddin. Moslem Uddin was tried in the travel is absolutely essential. Individuals who choose to visit these districts are urged to exercise

Jainal, another accused in the same case, was sentenced to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) and fined Tk 10,000, in default of

which, he is to suffer three more years of RI. After examining the witnesses and evidences, ASM Solaiman, Additional District and Session Judge-2, Naogaon, pronounced the

judgement in a jam-packed courtroom yesterday. The prosecution story in brief is that Akbar Ali, son of the victim, and four of his accomplices killed Baytul Sarder on December 11 as a sequel

to previous enmity over land. Mojibur Rahman, uncle of the victim, lodged a case with Naogaon Sadar Police Station against the five men. After investigating the case CID police submitted the chargesheet to the court. APP MG Shahriar conducted the

case on behalf of the State while advocates Fazlev Rabbi and Afzal Hossain appeared for the accused.

11 snatchers jailed by **Speedy Trial** Tribunal in Ctg microbus after killing driver, helper

UNB, Sirajganj

Miscreants killed the driver and helper of a microbus, threw the bodies on the road and took away the vehicle in the early hours of yesterday.

The bodies of driver Gopal Saha, 26, and helper Pintu, 25, were recovered from near Jhoul of Kamarkhand upazila yesterday. They came from Shantahar of Adamdighi thana in Bogra district.

Police suspect the miscreants hired the microbus from Shantahar at the dead of night to go to Sirajganj posing as businessmen

### AL candidate FROM PAGE 1

Huge contingents of police, paramilitary BDR, ansars and mobile striking forces mounted strong vigilance on the voting

About 50 per cent of votes were cast at almost all polling centres until about 2.00pm yesterday.

Among the five chairman contenders, two top rivals Sarder and Ivy, backed by the two main political parties, the ruling BNP and the Awami League, visited the polling stations.

At around noon, Ivy alleged that people were misguided at the polling stations, as the Election Commission reorganised many centres according to the earlier list.

Sarder was satisfied with the turnout.

Local election monitors described the polls as peaceful. A delegation led by Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shahid also observed the election.

Panic grips FROM PAGE 1 face arrest, he added.

The new law would be applicable to those, who came before September 30 last year and would stay till March 28 with nonimmigrant visa, Lavlu said.

Non-immigrant Bangladeshis, who have already applied for green card and are on the process of getting a green card, would also come under the law. he said.

The Bangladeshis in the US have expressed their anxiety and contacted different community eaders and the consul generals in New York and Los Angels, he said. Lavlu said the community lead-

ers might submit a memorandum to the attorney general and the Bush administration.

### FROM PAGE 1

received minor injuries there, was released from Dhaka Medical College Hospital after first aid.

to 2:00pm protesting the recent price hike of fuel and spiralling

Miscreants hijack Sun stays over city, away from countryside

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Though sunny weather prevailed in the capital yesterday, fog and mild cold wave continued in most other areas of the country.

The Meteorological Department forecasted that the mild cold wave would continue for a few days in some areas including Shatkhira, Jessore, Kustia, Srimangal and parts of Rajshahi and Dhaka divi-

sions The foggy weather will improve in some areas but dense fog may continue in northern districts and in river basins. The overall temperature in the country may rise.

The lowest temperature in the country yesterday was recorded at 5.7 degree Celsius at Chuadanga and the highest at 21.7 at Teknaf The lowest temperature in the capital was 9.7 and the highest 21.

A rare Black Bear died at Srimangal on Tuesday due to severe cold. The two-year-old Black Bear named Kalia was one of the collections of Shital Babu, a wildlife expert, according to reports reaching here.

# 7 labourers abducted in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Tribal miscreants kidnapped seven labourers from a brick field in Gabtola area under Kawkhali thana of the district in the early hours of vesterday

Sources said the kidnappers dressed in olive uniforms stormed the brick field at around 2:30am and kidnapped the labourers at gunpoint after failing to secure Tk 20 lakh as

Later, the abductors released two of the labourers, Wadood and Harun, and sent a message through them saying the five others would be released on payment of Tk 20 lakh.

som were identified as Junu Mia

# Police use club, water canon

AL called the hartal from 6:00am

prices of essentials and utility ser-

activists were denied access to the activists regrouped on the Dhaka University campus and brought out party office and were being clubbed by police, they became militant and a procession. Police dispersed it squatted on the street. They again in front of the university central mosque at about 10:30am when chanted anti-government slogans and did not leave the venue till 2 pm was proceeding towards the despite sprinkling of cold, dirty and Shahbag intersection from TSC coloured water on them as many as area.

# **Days of despair**

to implement the High Court order to

give me division in prison. The divi-

sion itself was a crude joke - I got a

"After a few sleepless nights, on

broken cot and an old mosquito net.

December 20, I bundled into a rickety

car on the way to the Dinajpur jail.

was scared and disturbing thoughts

crossed my mind throughout the trip

What if the police killed me and later

At the Dinaipur jail. Muntasir was

kept in a condemned cell. "On one

side of the jailhouse there were

people awaiting gallows while on the

other there were tuberculosis

walls and were downright dirty."

patients. The toilets had bamboo

He also saw hundreds of prison-

ers, arrested during the Operation

Clean Heart. "Because of torture.

they were unable to stand up straight

Everyone was on detention order.

Some of them did not want to get out

on bail in fear that they might be

arrested again under Section 54

taken on remand and tortured again. I

got the impression that the govern-

ment might have detained the whole

penalise the government for ignoring

its orders. "The government called

me an extortionist and terrorist. The

High Court relieved me of such

slander. Will the High Court not take

act against such slandering of peo-

ple? Should it not set an example by

giving a suo motto rule to stop

ment become oppressors, the civil

society is bound to be destroyed

there. If there is no civil society,

Shahriar made similar remarks

The government may bring allega-

tion against anyone and can sue

anyone. But under what capacity can

at all stages after his arrest. "I drank

water from the tap of a bathroom and

was forced to sit on the floor in chilly

environment. It seemed that I was not

All prisoners were treated like

Shahriar was kept in an isolated

cell in the Dhaka Central Jail for three

days. He was not given the scope

even to walk. When he protested, he

was transferred to the Kashimpur jail.

gave him division. No sooner had the

division order reached the

Kashimpur jail, he was sent to the

because it does not have any division

cell. Although my case has been filed

in Dhaka, I was sent to Chittagong on

the night of December 21 on a

microbus just to ensure that I don't

get the division treatment and the

provision to meet regularly my family

"I was sent to the Chittagong jail

When he was there, the court

animals, he said. "This has virtually

bogged down the whole jail adminis-

a human being but an animal."

tration.

Chittagong jail.

He said he had faced harassment

they punish anyone before trial?

nobody can live," he commented.

"When the state and the govern-

oppression of people by the state?"

Muntasir urged the High Court to

country.

claimed I was trying to escape."

Lutfozzaman Babar, Chief of Army FROM PAGE 1 Star Lieutenant General Hasan sioner Masud Chowdhury, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Modabbir

RAT ready

were State Minister for Home Affairs

Staff Major General SM Igramul

yesterday, "Bangladesh is a demo-

cratic country and its people believe

in democracy and peace.

Bangladesh does not believe in

terrorism nor did it support terrorism

ever. It has been working shoulder to

shoulder with the current global move

The USA might have been influ-

enced by the propaganda launched

against Bangladesh by some vested

groups both at home and abroad, he

Bangladesh nationals under the

influence of the vested quarters is

completely unjust. We don't believe

in crime and have always acted tough

against it," said the LGRD and coop-

its restrictions on Bangladesh nation-

**Opposition blames** 

President of the Jatiya Party (JP)

General Secretary of the Jatiya

Anwar Hossain Monju said, "I fear

that we are gradually losing our

He hopes the USA would soon lift

"Imposition of such restrictions on

for elimination of terrorism."

FROM PAGE 12

Hossain Chowdhury.

were also present.

FROM PAGE 1

said.

eratives minister.

FROM PAGE 1

network.

needed for remedy.

31 years," he added.

such a drastic step, he said.

would reconsider its decision

friends all over the world.

**BNP** terms

"They failed to produce any identification papers or warrant of Among others, Principal Staff arrest when my wife asked them to. Officer Major General AM They took me to the Detective Branch office at gun point.' Mahmuduzzaman, Chief of general

Similar was Shahriar's experience. "After my arrest, I was not given Hag. Additional Inspector General food for more than 25 hours and had of Police Mohammad Ashraful Huda to drink tap water from a bathroom." Muntasir was kept in a dirty cell at

the instruction of Additional Deputy Commissioner Kohinoor. At around that time.

Awami League leaders Saber Hossain Chowdhury and Shafi Ahmed were brought into the DB office and kept in the chambers of two officials, Muntasir said. "I realised they were more anary with me.'

Next day, the 50-plus academic was taken to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court. shown arrested under Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure as if he were "a vagabond or a drunkard"

"Every policeman knew me and so did the chief metropolitan magistrate. Yet, the court was told that I mingled with crime syndicates. The reward I got for 30 years in teaching was an order for a three-day remand." Muntasir lamented.

"It is ironical that a notorious criminal like Dipjal was not even put on remand whereas arms were found in his residence. The magistrate who issued the remand order should guit magistracy. These people just obey the government. They should not be even called magistrates. The whole magistracy should be abolished.

"The High Court remains our only hope. However, when the higher judiciary stayed the remand order and asked the government to send me to jail, the government ignored the ruling.'

Muntasir wondered what the Samaitantrik Dal (JSD) Hasanul remedy was for such blatant viola-Hug Inu said the Bush administrations of High Court order. "Are we tion took the decision based on its living in dark ages?" he asked. 'wrong policy' to identify each Muslim as a member of al-Qaeda

The reputed historian and chambion of anti-fundamentalism was aken in blindfolds for interrogation.

"The decision, despite Bangladesh's support to the US war "Why would anyone be taken on remand with his eyes blindfolded? against terrorism, proves that Bangladesh is friendless on the Why would there be a joint interrogainternational front. The country had tion cell along with army intelligence never faced this situation in the last personnel? What is the legal basis of a joint interrogation cell? During the Inclusion of the Jamaat-e-Islami liberation war, the Pakistan army and leaders Motiur Rahman Nizami and Al-Badrs used to take people blind-Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid has folded. Are we following that path?" given the USA the chance to take

Muntasir was repeatedly asked why he wrote so much by the interro-However, Inu hoped that the USA aators.

Meanwhile, Shahriar, who has more than 50 books to his name, 30 of which against fundamentalism. was taken to the Cantonment police station on remand.

The chief metropolitan magistrate had earlier ordered the police to produce him before the court upon expiry of his remand and make sure no one other than the investigation officer questioned him.

The court had also ordered the police not to touch him while interrogating and to take care of him should he fall sick. Besides, the High Court also stayed his remand order.

and lawyers," Shahriar noted "It's like the weird tale of Alice in Wonderland where punishment precedes trial. What is possible in a fantasy story is being made possible in this society.'

toll money.

The five labourers held for ran-Abul Hossain, Kawser, Selim and Shahjahan

Kawkhali Police said they were aware about the incident.

Bablu, a former Deputy Mayor of Khulna City was going to Satkhira in a car.

After investigation, police submitted a charge sheet against 13 people including Jubo League leader Hirok who is also wanted in journalist Shamsur Rahman murder case.

After hearing of the case Additional District and Sessions Judge Khandokar Hasibuddin pronounced the verdict.

## Businessman murdered in Bogra UNB, Bogra

Unidentified assailants strangled a businessman in the town's North Chelopara area Wednesday night.

Police recovered the body of Babul Hossain, 40, from under the Chelopara Railway Bridge yesterday. Reasons behind the killing could

not be known immediately. The body was buried after per-

forming autopsy in the hospital. A case was filed in this connection.

### President FROM PAGE 12

pay more attention to the quick disposal of cases. He reminded them of the maxim: "Justice delayed is justice denied."

The president said the government has taken measures to hasten the trial of sensational cases as a step to improve the law and order situation. This has resulted in the disposal of many sensational cases within only four to five months.

The government has attached highest priority to improving the law and order situation and curb crime, he said adding that the Speedy Trial Act 2002 and the Speedy Trial Tribunal Ordinance 2002 have been enacted to protect public property.

Laying importance on removing illiteracy and poverty as well as ensuring quality education in the shortest possible time, the president asked the DCs to play their due role in this regard.

Cabinet Secretary Sa'dat Hussain conducted the function. where secretaries of different ministries were also present

The Speedy Trial Tribunal here yesterday sentenced 11 people to four years rigorous imprisonment for snatching money from a bus passenger on October 31 last year.

Mohammad Shahidul Islam, Abdus Salam, Lokman, Tobarak, Morshed, Sujon Nath, Jahangir, Shaheed ilon and Biplob.

and court sources said. snatchers in guise of passengers

snatched Tk 52,200 from a bus passenger at gun-point from Baluchara under Bayezeed police station. The bus was coming from Fatikchhari.

chased the snatchers and caught nine of them

Riplob is still at large.

# Unseat govt

FROM PAGE 12

He alleged that the government used police to suppress the opposition and hinder exercising their democratic rights in organising rallies and processions.

Another organising secretary of the government within this year.

In his speech, Mohammad Hanif criticised the government for forcing police to behave roughly even with the opposition's female activists "We did not come here today to create law and order situation but to protest against fuel price hike."

Among others the rally was also addressed by central AL leaders including Abdur Rahman, Ivy Rahman, Omar Ali, Habibur Rahman Khan and Abdul Latif Siddiqui. Leaders of different front

organizations including advocate Qamrul Islam, Abdul Haq Sabuj, Mirza Azam, Abdus Salam Khan, Kazi Iqbal and Harunur Rashid Howladar also addressed the rally.

The convicts are Ibrahim,

Wahidul Islam, magistrate of the tribunal, also fined the accused Tk 2,000 each, in default, they have to suffer six more months in jail, police According to the prosecution, the

As bus passengers cried for help, a team of the joint forces

Later, police arrested Milon but

distribution among the cold-bitten

AL Organising Secretary Mahmudur Rahman Manna urged all left, democratic and progressive forces to unite against the government to establish a secular and democratic Bangladesh.

the party, Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed, also vowed to oust

Bangladesh following the decision,"

Railwav Station and Savedabadvices. The Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal Rampura Bridge-Moghbazar roads (JSD-Inu) supported it.

will be developed under the same The hartal affected business. academic activities at educational Meanwhile, repair of Jatrabari institutions and partially paralised Road and the road near the Holv life across the country. Cross College at Farmgate are

Inter-city buses did not ply but movement of trains, launches and flight operations at Zia International Airport were normal, sources said. Police clubbed AL activists, particularly the female ones, at Bangabandhu Avenue in the morning as they came in a procession and tried in vain to join their leaders at the party office.

AL Presidium member Matia Chowdhury, organising secretaries Mahmudur Rahman Manna, Akhtaruzzaman and Abdur Rahman, other central leaders including its city unit chief Mohammad Hanif were already in front of the office since dawn, right after police raised barbed wire fences there at about 4:30 am

As a group of 30 to 40 female AL

21 times since 9:30 am Police also sprinkled cold water

there

when a peaceful procession of Awami Ulama League reached

AL Presidium member Abdus Samad Azad was leading a group of party leaders and workers in a peaceful gathering at the Russell Square at Dhanmondi. At around 11 am, riot police dispersed them by charging batons and sprinkling cold water, injuring many. AL's Organising Secretary Abdul Mannan, Science and Technology Secretary Yafes Osman, Youth and Sports Secretary Dewan Shafiul Arefin Tutul, Office Secretary Abdul

Mannan Khan and Shechhashebak League Joint Convenor Pankai Devnath were among the leaders present there. Police also used cold and dirty

water to disperse workers of Jubo Mohila League near Shahbag intersection in the morning.

Later, the dispersed female

The Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the AL, brought out a procession and held rally on the Dhaka University campus during the hartal hours.

Addressing the rally in front of the Raju Memorial Sculpture at TSC, BCL leaders urged the student community to launch an all out movement against the "autocratic" rule of the BNP-led government.

The rally was addressed by among others, BCL President Liaquot Sikder, General Secretary Nazrul Islam Babu, Khan Moinul Islam Mustaq, Delwar Hossain and Hemayet Uddin Himu.

Classes and examinations could not be held at the university due to the hartal. Administrative activities continued partially

University buses did not ply sources said.

Additional police force was deployed and an army pick up van patrolled the DU campus during the hartal hours

"However, I was kept on remand for four days against a three-day order. I was questioned by the joint interrogation cell and asked all kinds of weird questions such what is fundamentalism, why do I go to India and why do I write about repression on Hindus and not on Muslims," Shahriar said.

Enam's transfer

#### FROM PAGE 12

Remand over, both Shahriar and to help dispose of the writ petition Muntasir were sent to the Dhaka pending with the High Court chal-Central Jail on December 12, each lenging the legality of Enam's arrest on a month's detention. under Section 54 of the CrPC and his subsequent police remand for

While there was no specific charge against Muntasir, Shahriar was implicated in a sedition case. It was not the first sedition case

against the eminent writer, though He had earlier spent 59 days in prison on a similar allegation.

For Muntasir though, it was a new experience.

"The whole process right from the arrest to remand to detention to release is torturous," the historian reminisced.

"The jail authorities took ten days

shown arrested. Enam's counsel took the Supreme Court order to the High Court bench that had issued rule. The court advised the counsel to come back on January 25 when it will fix the date of hearing.

interrogation in connection with the

bomb blast case in which he was

Dr Kamal Hossain and Barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud moved the petition for Enam while Additional Attorney General Abdur Rezzag Khan stood for the state

Tampering with Louis Kahn'sTerror-risk list

#### He said if the decision means FROM PAGE 12 Bangladeshis being subjected to

Architects, town planners, engineers scrutiny like finger tests, then it and members of the civil society told would definitely have a negative The Daily Star that the monumental Sangsad Bhaban, famed worldwide He said it is a matter of grave as an architectural marvel, is sure to concern since the US is the largest lose its identity due to the constructions. President of Dhaka Chamber of

They said the past government did irreparable damages to the landscape of the Sangsad Bhaban area by constructing hundreds of unplanned NAM apartment blocks just opposite the Bhaban without considering its architectural values. The buildings are already a visual nuisance. And they will pose a threat to the traffic on the Manik Mia Avenue as well once the flats are occupied.

The present government has embarked on tampering with the original design of the world famous architect in a bid to offer city dwellers a concrete jungle in a place adorned with open spaces, lakes, parks and gardens amid some of the finest structures in the world.

US is our largest market and the US Sources in the Ministry of Housing importers would hesitate to come to and Public Works said the government took up the projects at a time when they are unable to replace Now, the market may be hundreds of marble slabs, falling off squeezed following the labelling, he the walls of the Sangsad Bhaban, due to lack of funds.

"The marble slabs are falling apart ture, he added, and we urgently need to replace them and conduct tests as to how those

should be fixed," said an official. With the projects coming under severe criticism, top government officials have changed their tone in defence of the decision. Trying to justify the speakers

housing project, some claimed that the original plan of Kahn had a provision for houses for them. But according to an expert, Kahn's final design, submitted in

1973, did not have any provision like that A source in the Department of

Architecture under the housing and public works ministry said the government should have consulted the original consultancy in the USA.

To preserve the Sangsad Bhaban area from the so-called developers, we have to work constantly. We have absurd proposals from the government high-ups to paint the Bhaban. During the period of the past government, a bizarre proposal suggested that bulletproof shields be put up around the chairs of the leaders in the House," said an official source. It has always been difficult to make 'people' understand

the value of heritage and architec-

On Wednesday, the Sangsad Secretariat got back four acres of land on Mirpur Road, which had illegally been occupied by squatters, said another official source.

Originally, the Ministry of Social Welfare had set up a centre for the physically challenged (deaf and dumb) children. In exchange for the piece of land, the housing and public works ministry has given the social welfare ministry a piece of land in Kalyanpur to set up the centre, an official said.

"We are not sure what the government will do with the recovered land, but we feel it should be incorporated with the Sangsad Bhaban in line with the master plan by Kahn, the official added.

### Intersections FROM PAGE 12

work to meet the deadline.

The official said most parts of the project must be completed before the rainy season to ensure sustainability of the bitumen carpeting. Improvement of the drainage system to avoid water logging during the rainy season is important in saving bitumen carpeting from being worn out easily

### FROM PAGE 1

signal a change in the US view that asked our mission in Washington to Bangladesh has been and continstart lobbying with the decisionmakers to revert this decision." However, US Ambassador in

Dhaka Marry Ann Peters in a press statement yesterday said the goal of the security measure called National Security Entry Exit Registration System is to 'better track all foreign visitors' to the US.

The domestic registration requirements for certain temporary visitors from Banaladesh arriving and residing in the US are the latest phase of this long-term initiative, she added.

"It is important to note that the registration system applies only to temporary visitors to the US and does not apply to arriving immigrants, permanent residents and American citizens of Bangladesh descent," she mentioned.

Thus, she continued, the majority of travellers from Bangladesh to the US would not be subject to these restriction requirements.

the US and has got deep-rooted of "No country is exempted from this programme and citizens of many countries have already been subject to the requirement. Inclusion of Bangladesh in this ascertain the reasons behind the programme does not in any way US action

ues to be a staunch member of the international coalition against terrorism," she said. The foreign secretary said the government has already conveyed

its feeling to the US government through the US ambassador in Dhaka and the Bangladesh ambassador in Washington

He said Bangladesh is firmly committed to fighting against international terrorism and strongly abhors any form of terrorism.

Asked if the US decision would influence the Dhaka-Washington relations. he said. "Our relation with US is multifaceted and broadbased. We are committed to pursue

On economic impact of the US

restriction, the foreign secretary

said America is the single largest

export destination of Bangladeshi

readvmade garments. Besides, he

added, a lot of people is working in

interactions with different sectors.

The foreign secretary said 'care-

ful analysis of events' is needed to